POLYHEDRON

THE RPGA MAGAZINE

ISSUE 144 VOLUME 20 NUMBER 5 OCTOBER 2000

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RPGA NETWORK

BEYOND FANTASY

FROM THE INTOXICATING BREWER GNOMES TO THE HORRIBLE WRACK DRAGONS, FROM THE TINY BOTTLE IMP TO THE COLOSSAL MITHRIL GOLEM,

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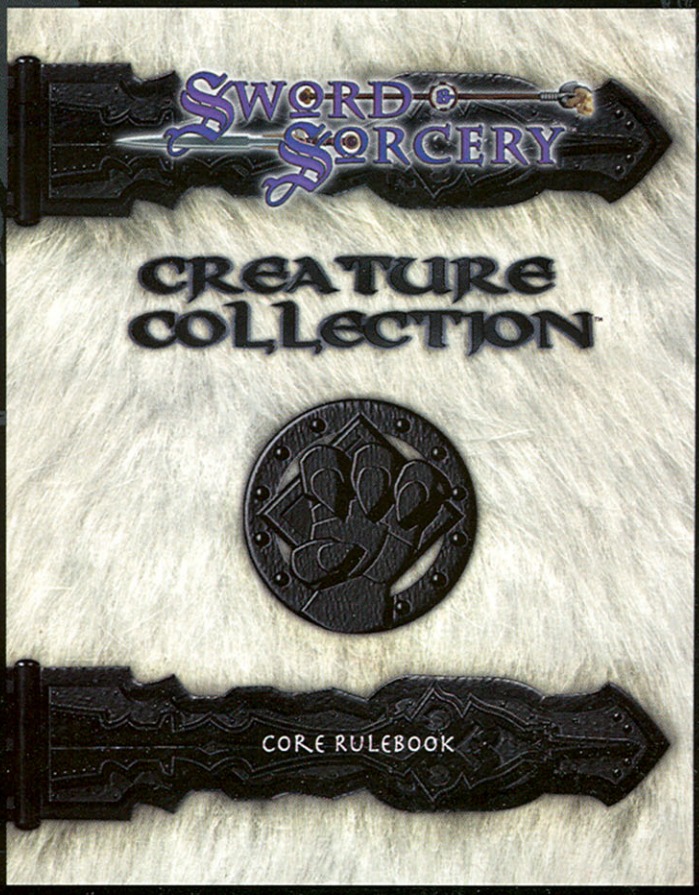

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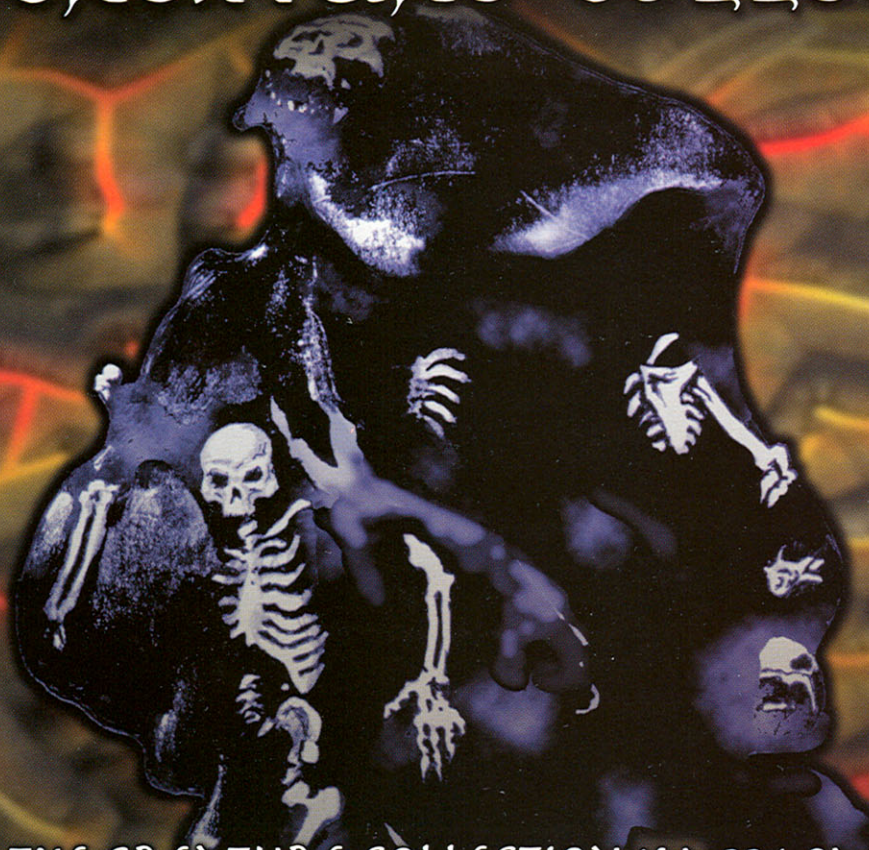

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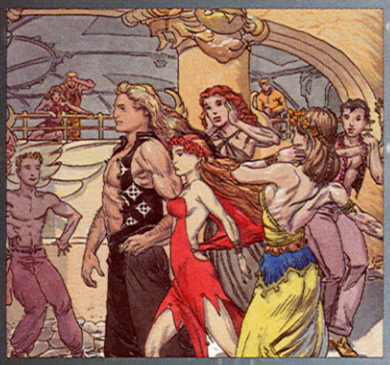

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Here Goes Everything...

Welcome to the new *Polyhedron*. As you can see, quite a lot has changed. Here in the RPGA® offices, we talk a lot about increasing the value of your membership. For the past 20 years, the RPGA NETWORK has been the strongest and best-connected network of roleplaying enthusiasts in the world.

We've managed that not-insignificant feat by listening to our members, and by giving them what they want. A little more than a year ago, in these very pages, I asked our North American members what they wanted in their *Polyhedron*. What you hold in your hands is the result of a year of active polling, discussion, and interaction with you, the RPGA member. When you told us that periodical support was one of the most important aspects of your RPGA membership, we listened. For more than a year, you've been filling out Reader Response surveys, telling us what you like and don't like. The new graphic and content of this rejuvenated *Polyhedron* is a response to that. It's a response we'll continue to fine-tune as time goes on. We're tremendously proud of this new direction (not to mention the launch of our sister magazine, the *Living Greyhawk Journal*), and look forward to your reactions and suggestions. This is your magazine, folks, and the more you participate in its creation (through sending in those response forms, hectoring us with emails, or even contributing your efforts), the more you have a say in its creation and direction.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome our readers from the UK and South Africa, who for the last two years have been receiving *Polyhedron UK*. For starters, no, you didn't miss 136 issues! *Polyhedron UK* was smashingly edited by Ian Richards, who did such a good job, we put him in charge of the UK office. Ian and his cadre of contributors set the bar in terms of quality and commitment, and it's our hope that this new global *Poly* carries on that great tradition.

With this issue, a single *Polyhedron* reaches out to RPGA members worldwide, giving us a unified voice. That said, we realize that different nations and cultures bring with them different play styles, interests, and concerns. The new *Polyhedron* isn't a step toward homogenization of the Network's voices, but instead is a platform for all voices. This issue includes contributions from the US, the UK, and Australia. As the Network continues to grow in Europe, the UK, Asia-Pacific, North America, and even South America (if you think that sounds like we're growing everywhere, you're right), we're looking to welcome even more international views and contributions within these pages.

So what is this new *Polyhedron* all about?

First, *Polyhedron* is your link to the greater RPGA Network. That makes it the ideal location for updates on international (and even local) happenings and notifications. This section, Network News, will alert you to important announcements of interest to the Network as a whole. It gives those of us on staff an outlet to reach the widest possible audience, both to share our thoughts and to ask for feedback.

Polyhedron's core, however, is gaming. Therefore, look to each issue to provide you with member-written articles on organized gaming (how to run a convention, convention reports, the ins-and-outs of scoring packets), as well as general-interest gaming articles anchored to a variety of different game systems. *The Polyhedron Review* will bring you the best (and occasionally the worst) in new roleplaying games and RPG supplements. *Web Wanderings* will help you use the Internet in your gaming research, and Simon Taylor's *Bare Bones*, a staple of *Polyhedron UK*, will offer idea kernels to help spark inspiration in your games.

We've put a lot of effort into making this *Polyhedron your Polyhedron*, but we realize that

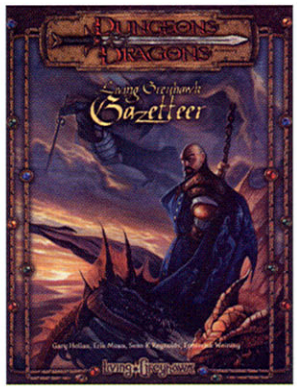
NEXT MONTH: LIVING GREYHAWK JOURNAL #2

The second issue of our blockbuster new magazine includes a full-size poster map of the City of Greyhawk like you've never seen it before! Old City teems with leaning tenements. Narrow roads and alleys cut through Clerkburg and the Artisans Quarter. With a map based on realism and playability, the Gem of the Flanaess finally looks worthy of the name! Complete with a comprehensive map key, including dozens of new locations!

Plus, Mysterious Places, News from Around the Flanaess, and more!

Living Greyhawk

improvements always can be made. Let us know how we're doing by sending an email to polyhedron@wizards.com, or by sending old-fashioned paper mail to: Polyhedron Magazine/PO Box 707/Renton, WA 98057-0707/USA. We're waiting to hear from you.



LIVING GREYHAWK GAZETTEER IN STORES NOW!

The Network's newest international shared-world DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® campaign, LIVING GREYHAWK,™ debuted at this year's GEN CON (US, UK, *and* Benelux, for those of you keeping score). Chances are you've already been introduced to the streets of the City of Greyhawk, and to the dangers that abound in the Greyhawk country assigned to your home nation, territory, or state. Now you can find the official guidebook to the campaign, the *Living Greyhawk Gazetteer*, at your locak bookstore, game shop, or favorite online retailer. The *Gazetteer* is a must-have supplement for those of you interested in participating in LIVING GREYHAWK. It includes campaign-specific character creation guidelines, as well as political and historical information on scores of intriguing nations and dozens of gods both malevolent and benign. The book also includes a huge poster map created specifically for the new campaign. Over the next few years RPGA members will determine the future of the World of Greyhawk. This is our starting point.

VIRTUAL SEATTLE

VIRTUAL SEATTLE: PRIME RUNNER UPDATE

Mission Seattle: 2000 is happening all over the US, Canada, and Australia as this is being written. Next year MS: 2001 will probably be in May or June. Why? Simple. At the 2001 GEN CON® Game Fair we'll be running Prime Runner again. As the players and GMs can attest, when we did this at GEN CON US in 1999 all the finalists were out on their feet by Sunday morning, due to the hectic schedule. That, and the final clashed with the final of the Nationals, with the possibility that one or more players may have had to choose between the two.

So, for 2001, we'll do it a little differently. Instead of qualifying games being run early in GEN CON, followed by the three round Prime Runner, qualifying games will be every Virtual Seattle game run between January 1st and July 1st at any convention or game day at which at least four tables in total (all systems, not just VS) are run. You must play a minimum of three VS games in that time to qualify, and the top 100 or so players (averaged) over that period will receive invitations to the Prime Runner event. And, the final will be in Slot 12, so we don't clash with the Nationals.

If you don't get an invite, don't despair. There will be regular VIRTUAL SEATTLE at GEN CON US (and possibly the other Gen Cons, as well)—a two round event in which everyone advances.

Around the Horn

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

ASIA-PACIFIC

Greetings from Downunder, where we have just hosted the world's largest sports carnival. While most of the world was focussed on Sydney for those two weeks, there has been plenty going on in the roleplaying arena, too.

Craig Walker, whom many of you have met on his visits to the US, has grabbed LIVING DEATH™ by the throat and introduced monthly LD game days in Sydney. This has proved popular with a solid core of 15 to 20 players and numerous irregulars, as well. Recently, Michael Vanderdonk has started running VIRTUAL SEATTLE sessions at these game days.

Paul Schmidt and Bob Beck have done a lot of work livening up interest in the Network in New Zealand, kickstarted by the introduction of LIVING GREYHAWK™ and continuing from there. The New Zealanders are keen to get a LIVING DRAGONQUEST campaign going—any takers out there? Thanks largely to the efforts of these folks (and others I have no doubt forgotten to name) and the release of Third Edition Dungeons & Dragons,® there has been renewed interest in the RPGA from Australian and New Zealand gamers, and our numbers are larger than they have ever been.

Over the past few years, table numbers of RPGA games here have been low—less than ten at some conventions. This last Labour Day weekend, we ran our first Third Edition D&D® and our first LIVING GREYHAWK events at Phenomenon in Canberra. With the other RPGA games at the con, we ran 38 tables. Not a lot by US standards, but huge for this part of the world. We also had a visit from Network HQ Manager Robert Wiese, who ran some LG for us, as well as the Team Event. Many of you will no doubt be pleased to read that the Naughty Weasels did not advance to the second round of that game, thus proving that they don't win *every* Clubs Decathlon event they enter.

Which brings me on to the club scene. At the start of this year, there was one RPGA club in Asia-Pacific—the Naughty Weasels, based in Canberra. Since June, we have added a club in Perth (with some 50 members) and one in Sydney. As I write this, we are signing up another Sydney club, a second Canberra club, one in Melbourne, one in Townsville, and one in New Zealand. Most of these clubs are interested in playtesting more than in the Decathlon, but perhaps they can be persuaded to participate in both.

So, what's coming up? Possibly a WINTER FANTASY™ Downunder if we can find enough GMs and a suitable venue. Being in the southern hemisphere, we'd be running it in May or June if it happens.

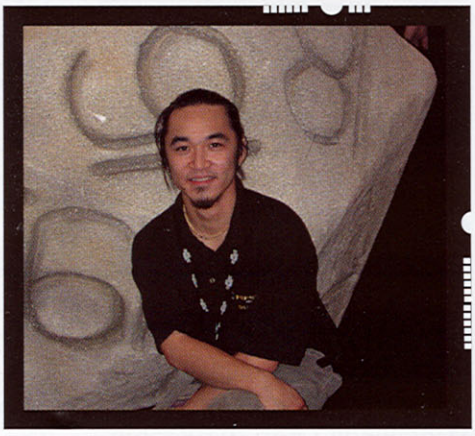
What else? More RPGA games at more Asia-Pacific conventions than ever before. The enthusiasm among the members is high, and we'll be taking advantage of that enthusiasm and, at the same time, giving the members what they want—more games.

WES NICHOLSON
BRANCH MANAGER, ASIA-PACIFIC
Wes@dynamite.com.au

CONTINENTAL AMERICAS

Hello and welcome to the ever-expanding RPGA NETWORK. I extend good tidings from the Continental North and South Americas. The winds of change are upon us, and it is time for everyone to be made aware.

Firstly, something that will affect all of you residing in the United States. Soon, all of the Regions that are designated for the RPGA Regional Directors will change. At current stand-



Branch manager Tom Ko helps a giant cheat at GEN CON. "A critical hit!" cries Tom.

ing, the nation is divided into 11 regions. Soon, the states will be rearranged into 25 different regions, giving the RPGA Regional Directors an average of two states each to manage. This will occur beginning in January, 2001. How exactly we'll break down the country has yet to be decided. When the dust settles, this information will be posted on the RPGA website: www.rpga.com.

You say, "But wait, that leaves 14 new regions that will not have an RD! Who is going to be their Regional Director?" Yes, you've guessed it! It could be you.

So, if you are an avid gamer and have some good knowledge of the RPGA, you may be a likely candidate for a Regional Director position. Qualified applicants for an RD position should be a person who has been active in coordinating conventions/games days, organizers of role-playing clubs, and generally really active in the RPG community. If you are one of the few and the proud and are interested in joining the ranks of the RPGA Regional Directors, please send a resumé and short gaming history to the contact information below. Or if you know anyone who you believe would be excellent for the job, please refer them.

Ok, now on to some fun stuff. Service Points. For some time now, it has been the perception of the members that Service Points seemed to have no real tangible benefits. And often times members were not sure how to redeem them.

We have been working on an automated system by which you can redeem your hard-earned Service Points for some really cool stuff! It will be as simple as filling out your paperwork and checking out what new products you can get each quarter.

So keep your attention to the RPGA website for more details. And contact your local Regional Director if you would like to lend volunteer assistance to the Network. As you may have guessed, working with the RD is the exact way to earn those service points.

The future looks very bright, and all sorts of great new programs are under way. If you thought the year 2000 was a good year for gaming, wait until 2001.

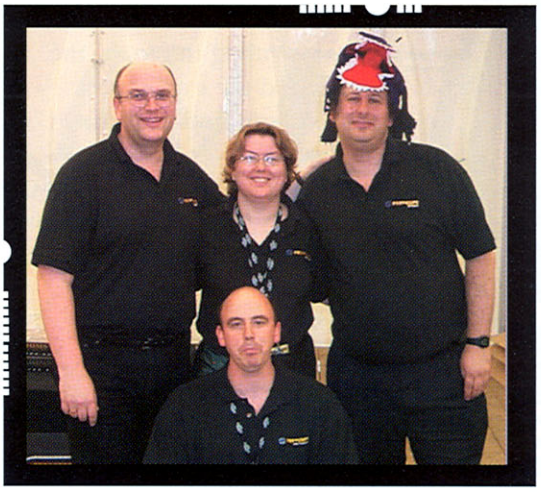
As always, live with a purpose and laugh without a reason.

Tom Ko
Branch Manager,
Continental Americas
rpgahq@wizards.com

EUROPE

Things are moving in Europe, and they are moving fast. The RPGA has been taking giant leaps forward. In only a couple of months, we've gone from having a two-colour, 32-page US-centric *Polyhedron* to a full-colour, 64 page global magazine. But it's not just the magazine that's focusing on the whole world. The RPGA is expanding in all new markets as well. We have more than doubled the number of members on the continent, we added 8 more countries, and we are getting more and more demand for convention support... I love it!

Our largest convention to date was held September 23 and 24 in 's Hertogenbosch (good fun to pronounce if you're not a native Dutch speaker). Although I can't say that everything went as smoothly as planned, it was a great convention with a lot of excellent games and the help of numerous volunteers who made it all happen.



Branch managers Ian Richards and Ann Van Dam with Ratty (in hat, natch) and Mark Smith (bottom) at Gen Con Benelux.

I'm proud and happy that I have been given the chance to lead the European branch of the RPGA Network. Although most of our markets are still in a start-up phase, we have been expanding significantly in some unexpected countries like Russia and Greece. It isn't always easy to run a global club in Europe. We have more local language problems than we really want to, and although we have lots of scenarios and resources available, they are usually just not available in the right language. We know that you would like to see translations or local language scenarios or even translated *Polyhedron* articles, and we are committed to getting you just that...only we need people to help translate or write for us. With your help we can make this work! *(cont. next page)*

The RPGA will be here for you, providing the tools, the games and the experience! May the sun find you safe in the morning,

Ann Van Dam
Branch Manager, Europe
RPGAEurope@wizards.be

UNITED KINGDOM, IRELAND, AND SOUTH AFRICA

The last couple of months have probably been the busiest ever for the RPGA here in the UK.

Firstly, just prior to Gen Con UK, Sean Connor joined the staff at UK HQ as Living™ Campaigns Coordinator. This is a culmination and acknowledgement of the enormous amount of work Sean has put in planning, developing, launching and maintaining firstly Sarbreenar: The Living City™ and now Living Greyhawk. You may applaud.

So what's new?

The membership in the UK has motored up to the 5,000 mark and is still growing. This leaves us logistical challenges and another reason to welcome Sean on board. Gen Con UK moved home and arrived in the North West with a bang. Manchester, though it was a new venue, coped extremely well with 4,000 "crazy" gamers. Even with an enormous amount of advance notice that Gen Con is a truly "unique beast" the guys and gals at the conference centre got quite a shock at how "unique," but did a great job in making us feel welcome with a totally flexible approach. Total numbers were up by 1,200 on the previous year, and we brought back some of the events that were sadly cut from Loughborough. True, there is still room for improvement, but nothing that isn't easily correctable as the "beast" becomes a year older and grows again.

In South Africa we have established a monthly games day as a pilot project in the Cape Town area, offering both classic and Living games. These have been so successful that we are looking to see how we can work a similar project in the UK on a regional basis. Congratulations go to Andre and his team for the amazing work. Interested parties can contact Andre for more details at AVermaak@naspers.com.

In Ireland, we are looking for volunteers to help run Living environments, especially the new Living Greyhawk campaign. Contact Sean at seanc@wizards.com or visit the rpgauk.com site to see what Living Greyhawk is all about. That said, we are looking at attending more events in Ireland in 2001, as well as creating structures for more locally focused activities. If you are interested in helping out, contact me at the address or number below.

So where are we next?

With Gen Con UK and Benelux behind us, the Branch will be on the trail, running sanctioned events at: FallCon (Oxford), RAFWA, (Closed event to service personnel only), Bi-frost (West Bromwich), Partizan Halloween (Leicester plus Dragonmeet—London). Full details can be found in the events section of the website at www.rpgauk.com.

New staff member Sean Connor pictured at his former job, Luggage Boy at the Amsterdam Airport.

Well, I said in the very last *Polyhedron* Europe, Australia, and Africa that I wouldn't be putting together another edition. I do, as you see, contribute and help with articles and features from around the branch for this new global edition of *Polyhedron*. So, if you have any ideas you want to submit, contact either Erik direct or myself at RPGA UKHQ at ianr@wizards.com or 01628 786913.

Take care for now, and may Tymora shine on your d20s always.

Ian Richards
Branch Manager, UK,
Ireland and South Africa
Ianr@wizards.com

SECRETS OF THE CITY OF RAVENS

BY RICHARD BAKER

Take one roguish sorcerer (or sorcerous rogue), add a beautiful swordswoman with a mysterious mission, stir with an ambitious Red Wizard and the Game of Masks, then spike it with spies, spirits, assassins, strange magics, and skullduggery—and set the whole mess bubbling in the chaotic cauldron of Raven's Bluff. You've got *The City of Ravens*, the latest FORGOTTEN REALMS® novel and the first of a new series set in the wondrous and deadly cities that dot Faerûn.

A prominent item in *The City of Ravens* is a magical book called the *Sarkonagael*. The search for this ancient tome draws the hero (?) of the story, Jack Ravenwild, into all manner of plots and machinations. In this article you'll learn a little about the history of this remarkable and deadly tome, in much the same fashion as numerous other unique spellbooks were described in the 1995 FORGOTTEN REALMS® sourcebook *Pages from the Mages*.

Spoiler Warning: The details of this article give away a couple of small surprises in the novel. If you read this now and then read *The City of Ravens*, you'll be better informed as to what's going on in the novel than the average reader. That said, we're pretty sure that reading this article now won't ruin the book for you.

THE SARKONAGAEL SECRETS OF THE SHADEWRIGHTS

The *Sarkonagael* is a large tome about 14 inches tall, 12 inches wide, and 2 inches thick. It is made of 70 pages of vellum stitched to firm leather backings. The leather backings are laced and bound between wooden covers, tightly wrapped in the leathery hide of a young shadow dragon. Massive silver clasps secure the binding, and a silver skull is embossed in the center of the front cover. The title is stamped out in silver chasing.

About half of the book consists of a long, rambling essay (apparently copied from some older source) on the relationship of the plane of Shadow to the prime material plane. Scattered throughout the tome are numerous spells, included at whatever point the author deemed most appropriate. These spells include *abolish shadows**, *blur*, *chill touch*, *darkness*, *fear*, *greater shadow conjuration*, *greater shadow evocation*, *nondetection*, *phantasmal killer*, *shadow bolt**, *shadow conjuration*, *shadow evocation*, *shadow simulacrum**, *shadow sight**, and *shadow walk*. The *spells abolish shadows*, *shadow bolt*, *shadow simulacrum*, and

The City of Ravens is the first novel in quite some time to visit Raven's Bluff. Setting a novel in the LIVING CITY™ was challenging, but I tried to be respectful of all the hard work the members have put into this setting over the years. I didn't want to commandeer someone's character and pull his or her strings in a way that the player wouldn't like, so some of the principal characters in the book I made up just for this story.

I was scrupulously careful to use street names, neighborhoods, and other established details of the city wherever possible, so you'll find lots of place names that you'll recognize. I tried to tell a riveting, dramatic, and darkly humorous story without blowing up the moon, which is our code-phrase for what happens when a novel author breaks the world in some way that just can't be fixed. (Sorry about Purtil's Tower!)

Anyway, I hope you enjoy *The City of Ravens*, which hits bookstores this December!

shadow sight appear to be unique, which makes the *Sarkonagael* extremely valuable to wizards with an inclination toward the Shadow Weave, illusion, or necromancy.

The author of the book identifies himself only by a wizard's rune, which appears on the title page of the tome. The mage Horvaeyl referred to the mysterious author as the Shadewright, based on the *Sarkonagael's* subtitle. No one is certain who or what the shadewrights really were, or even when or where they lived. All that is known for certain is that the *Sarkonagael* is written in an archaic version of Thorass, with dialect and phrasing that hints at ancient Hlondath—the last successor-state of vanished Netheril. Hlondath fell more than 1,000 years ago.

The *Sarkonagael's* first modern appearance was in 1218 DR, when it was recovered from a sand-shrouded tower buried in the wastes of Anauroch by a band of adventurers known as the Company of the Desert Hawk. The mage Rauthalind, leader of the party, gave the *Sarkonagael* to his old mentor, Horvaeyl of Yulash. Horvaeyl examined the book carefully and copied some of the unique spells. He corresponded with several other wizards regarding the *Sarkonagael*, and promised at one point to send it to Rhauntides of Deepingdale. But Horvaeyl died in a vicious civil war that swept Yulash in 1336 DR, and mercenaries allied with the city's pro-Zhentish faction pillaged Horvaeyl's tower following the wizard's death.

The *Sarkonagael* then vanished for nearly twenty years. But in the year 1361 DR, the mage Gerard defeated the Zhentarim enchanter Karsool, and discovered the *Sarkonagael* on Karsool's person. Gerard carried the book with him, studying it carefully, when he ventured on to Raven's Bluff. He made the City of Ravens his base of operation for three years, but in 1366 DR Gerard vanished while exploring a lich's crypt hidden in the Flooded Forest.

After Gerard failed to return from his expedition, representatives of the Wizards' Guild inventoried his belongings and sold his tower. The wizard Durezil Nightcloak oversaw the disposition of Gerard's estate, but was himself slain by hungry trolls in 1371 DR. No one knows if Durezil sold the book, kept it for himself, or lost it during his last expedition, but the necromancer Iphegor the Black is known to have purchased Nightcloak's collection of arcane tomes from Durezil's companions shortly after Durezil's death. Iphegor is an exceedingly private individual who does not discuss the contents of his library, but it is possible, perhaps even likely, that he may have the *Sarkonagael* secreted in his well-defended tower in Raven's Bluff.

ABOLISH SHADOWS

Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 10 feet/level
Area: Up to 10-ft-radius/level emanation centered on you
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: Yes

A burst of dark energy leaps forth from your body and disrupts all shadows in the area of effect. This has two primary effects:

1. Shadow creatures (including shadows, shades, and other monsters or beings of the shadow type) suffer 1d6 points of damage per caster level, to a maximum of 10d6 damage. Creatures subject to this effect are entitled to a Fortitude save for half damage.

2. Shadow and darkness spells (including shadow conjurations and shadow evocations) may be dispelled. Make a dispel check (1d20 + your caster level, maximum +10) against a DC of 11 + the target spell's caster level.

Material Component: A small piece of obsidian.

SHADOW BOLT

Conjuration (shadow)
Level: Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level)
Area: 5 feet wide to medium range
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: Yes

You conjure a black bolt of shadow energy that begins at your fingertips and crackles out to the maximum range. The bolt inflicts 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage and 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage, plus 1 point per 3 caster levels (maximum 1d4+5 points) of each to each creature within its area. Lost ability score points are recovered normally at the rate of 1 point per day.

Note that Constitution loss also causes a reduction in hit points by lowering the victim's Constitution ability modifier. (Creatures cannot be reduced to less than 1 hit point per Hit Die by Constitution loss.) This hit point loss may prove fatal to a creature already injured even if the Constitution loss does not kill the victim. Creatures without Strength scores or Constitution scores are unaffected by this spell.

SHADOW SIMULACRUM

Illusion (shadow)
Level: Sor/Wiz 7
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level)
Target: One living creature, SZ Large or smaller
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You rip away one creature's shadow and charge it with dark power, creating a duplicate of the target. The target is allowed a Will save to resist the effect. If the spell works, a copy of the target creature appears at the point you indicate, within 30 feet of the target.

The shadow-simulacrum copies the target creature in every detail, including weapons, gear, spells memorized, and all skills and abilities. The shadow-simulacrum attacks the target creature immediately on your turn. If you can communicate with the shadow-simulacrum, you can direct the shadow-simulacrum to not attack, to attack particular enemies, or to perform other actions. The shadow-simulacrum acts normally on the last round of the spell and disappears at the end of its turn. The victim's shadow returns to normal when the shadow-simulacrum is dismissed or destroyed.

The duplicate resembles the target perfectly in conditions of partial darkness or illumination, but in broad daylight, it is clearly a grayed-out copy of the subject. Any shadow-possessions created by the spell vanish at the end of the spell's duration.

If you wish, you can make the shadow-simulacrum last for up to 1 day per caster level by investing it with a portion of your own lifeforce. This requires 100 XP plus 5 XP per hit point of the target creature. You can wait to see if the target fails its saving throw before deciding whether to invest experience in the shadow-simulacrum to make it persistent.

Material Component: A black onyx worth no less than 50 gold pieces.

SHADOW SIGHT

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You confer upon the subject the ability to see 120 feet in total darkness, or 60 feet in magical darkness. The subject sees in black and white, but it is otherwise like normal sight. Shadows do not obscure your vision in the slightest, so characters or creatures attempting to use the Hide skill are unable to hide from the subject unless they have camouflage or the ability to hide in plain sight.

This spell is particularly useful when combined with *deeper darkness*.

Material Component: A pinch of powdered quartz, preferably smoky in color.

Forgotten Realms® 2000

SURVIVAL KIT

With the introduction of Third Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS,® an entire world of roleplayers are making the switch to the best RPG ever crafted. The changes wrought with the new edition likewise leave players and Dungeon Masters of the FORGOTTEN REALMS faced with a multitude of decisions regarding character creation, domains for deities, and other essential components.

In order to allow all of you to adventure in the Realms under the new D&D® rules, we're releasing this "survival kit" of information that will get you through to the release of the campaign setting in June.

Are all the changes that will befall Toril hinted at below? Not at all, but this information will allow you to play in the Realms for the next few months.

Starting in November, we'll start revealing some of the other exciting changes we've got underway. You'll be able to see glimpses of those changes in the pages of Dragon Magazine, through the RPGA, and on the website.

Until Swords Part,

Jim Butler, Brand Manager

RACES

Some of the races in the FORGOTTEN REALMS differ from those in the *Player's Handbook* and other core D&D sources. Listed below are the ability score modifiers of the standard player character races. Note that these races have additional abilities beyond their ability scores; these will be revealed in the campaign setting book.

Human: as *Player's Handbook* human.
Dwarf, gold: +2 Constitution, -2 Dexterity.
Dwarf, shield: as *Player's Handbook* dwarf.
Elf, drow: +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma (as *Monster Manual* drow).
Elf, moon: as *Player's Handbook* elf.
Elf, sun: -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence.
Elf, wild: +2 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence.
Elf, wood: +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, -2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma.
Gnome, rock: as *Player's Handbook* gnome.
Half-elf: as *Player's Handbook* half-elf (half-drow get 60 ft. darkvision instead of low-light vision).
Half-orc: as *Player's Handbook* half-orc.
Halfling, lightfoot: as *Player's Handbook* halfling.

MULTICLASSING

Monks and paladins have the restriction that if they ever take a level in another class, they cannot return to the path of the monk or paladin. In the FORGOTTEN REALMS, there are some monk and paladin orders that loosen this restriction, allowing their members to gain levels in a particular class without sacrificing the ability to return. A few examples of these groups, and their available multiclassing options, are:

Monk of Ilmater: cleric of Ilmater.
Halfling Monk: fighter or rogue.
Monks of the Yellow Rose: ranger.
Paladin of Chauntea: cleric of Chauntea.
Paladin of Helm: cleric of Helm, fighter.
Paladin of Ilmater: cleric of Ilmater.
Paladin of Lathander: cleric of Lathander.
Paladin of Moradin: cleric of Moradin, fighter.
Paladin of Torm: any one other class.
Paladin of Tyr: cleric of Tyr, fighter.
Paladin of Yondalla: monk.

DEITIES

The new FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting has over thirty new domains tailored for the deities of Faerûn. Details of those domains and their granted powers are too lengthy to go into here (and we don't want to spoil the surprise), but what follows are the living deities from the *Faiths & Avatars* trilogy (plus the entire orc pantheon) and their *Player's Handbook* domains. Some of them look pretty skimpy, but that's generally because there are more FORGOTTEN REALMS domains that aren't mentioned here. If you're unhappy with the domain choices for your favorite deity, don't worry. There's plenty of good stuff in the campaign setting book.

NAME	DOMAINS
Abbathor	Evil, Trickery, Luck
Aerdrie Faenya	Air, Animal, Chaos, Good
Akadi	Air, Travel, Trickery
Angharradh	Chaos, Good, Plant, Protection
Anhur	Chaos, Good, War, Strength
Arvoreen	War, Protection, Law, Good
Auril	Air, Evil, Water
Azuth	Magic, Knowledge, Law
Baervan Wildwanderer	Good, Travel, Plant, Animal
Bahgtru	Chaos, Evil, Strength
Baravar Cloakshadow	Good, Protection, Trickery
Berronar Truesilver	Law, Good. Protection, Healing
Beshaba	Chaos, Evil, Trickery, Luck
Brandobaris	Trickery, Travel, Luck
Calladuran Smoothhands	Earth
Chauntea	Plant, Animal, Earth, Good, Protection
Clangeddin Silverbeard	Law, Good, War, Strength
Corellon Larethian	Chaos, Good, Protection, War
Cyric	Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Trickery
Cyrrollalee	Law, Good
Deep Duerra	Law, Evil
Deep Sashelas	Chaos, Good, Water, Knowledge, Magic
Deneir	Good, Knowledge
Dugmaren Brightmantle	Knowledge, Chaos, Good
Dumathoin	Earth, Protection, Knowledge
Eilistraee	Chaos, Good
Eldath	Good, Plant, Water, Protection
Erevan Ilesere	Chaos, Trickery, Luck
Eshowdow	Chaos, Evil, Destruction
Fenmarel Mestarine	Chaos, Travel, Plant, Animal
Finder Wyvernspur	Chaos
Flandal Steelskin	Good
Gaerdal Ironhand	Law, Good, War, Protection
Garagos	Chaos, War, Destruction, Strength
Gargauth	Law, Evil, Trickery
Garl Glittergold	Good, Protection, Trickery
Geb	Earth, Protection
Ghaunadaur	Chaos, Evil
Gond	Earth, Fire, Knowledge
Gorm Gulthyn	Protection, Law, Good, War
Grumbar	Earth
Gruumsh	Chaos, Evil, War, Strength
Gwaeron Windstrom	Good, Plant, Animal, Travel, Knowledge
Haela Brightaxe	Luck, Chaos, Good, War
Hanali Celanil	Chaos, Good
Hathor	Good
Helm	Law, Protection, Strength
Hoar	Law, Travel
Horus-Re	Law, Good, Sun
Ilmater	Healing, Strength, Law, Good
Ilneval	Evil, Destruction, War
Isis	Good, Water, Magic
Istishia	Water, Destruction, Travel
Jergal	Law, Death
Kelemvor	Law, Death, Travel, Protection
Kiaransalee	Chaos, Evil
Kossuth	Fire, Destruction
Labelas Enoreth	Chaos, Good, Knowledge
Laduger	Law, Evil, Magic, Protection
Lathander	Good, Protection, Strength, Sun
Lliira	Chaos, Good
Lolth	Chaos, Evil
Loviatar	Law, Evil, Strength, Fire
Lurue	Animal, Chaos, Good, Healing
Luthic	Evil, Earth, Healing
Malar	Chaos, Evil, Animal, Strength
Marthammor Duin	Good, Protection, Travel
Mask	Evil, Trickery, Luck
Mielikki	Animal, Good, Plant, Travel
Milil	Good, Knowledge
Moradin	Earth, Good, Law, Protection, War
Mystra	Good, Magic, Knowledge
Nephthys	Chaos, Good, Protection
Nobanion	Law, Good, Animal
Oghma	Knowledge, Luck, Travel, Trickery
Osiris	Law, Good, Plant, Death
Red Knight	Law, War
Rillifane Rallathil	Chaos, Good, Plant, Protection
Savras	Law, Knowledge, Magic
Sebek	Evil, Water, Animal
Segojan Earthcaller	Good, Earth
Sehanine Moonbow	Chaos, Good, Knowledge, Travel
Selûne	Travel, Chaos, Good, Protection
Selvetarm	Chaos, Evil, War,
Set	Law, Evil, Air, Magic
Shar	Evil, Knowledge
Sharess	Chaos, Good, Travel
Shargass	Chaos, Evil, Trickery
Sharindlar	Chaos, Good, Healing
Shaundakul	Travel, Chaos, Protection, Air
Sheela Peryroyl	Plant, Air
Shevarash	Chaos, War
Shiallia	Good, Plant, Animal
Siamorphe	Law, Knowledge
Silvanus	Animal, Plant, Water, Protection
Solonor Thelandira	Chaos, Good, War, Plant
Sseth	Chaos, Evil, Knowledge
Sune	Chaos, Good, Protection
Talona	Chaos, Evil, Destruction
Talos	Chaos, Evil, Destruction, Fire
Tempus	Chaos, Protection, Strength, War
Thard Harr	Chaos, Good, Plant, Animal
Thoth	Magic, Knowledge
Tiamat	Law, Evil
Torm	Law, Good, Healing, Protection, Strength
Tymora	Chaos, Good, Luck, Protection, Travel
Tyr	Good, Knowledge, Law, War
Ubtao	Plant, Protection
Ulutiu	Law, Animal
Umberlee	Chaos, Evil, Water, Destruction
Urdlen	Chaos, Evil, Earth
Urogalan	Law, Protection, Earth, Death
Uthgar	Strength, War, Animal, Chaos
Valkur	Chaos, Good, Air, Protection
Velsharoon	Evil, Magic, Death
Vergadain	Luck, Trickery
Vhaeraun	Chaos, Evil, Travel, Trickery
Waukeen	Knowledge, Travel, Protection
Xvim	Law, Evil, Destruction
Yondalla	Good, Law, Protection
Yurtrus	Evil, Death, Destruction,

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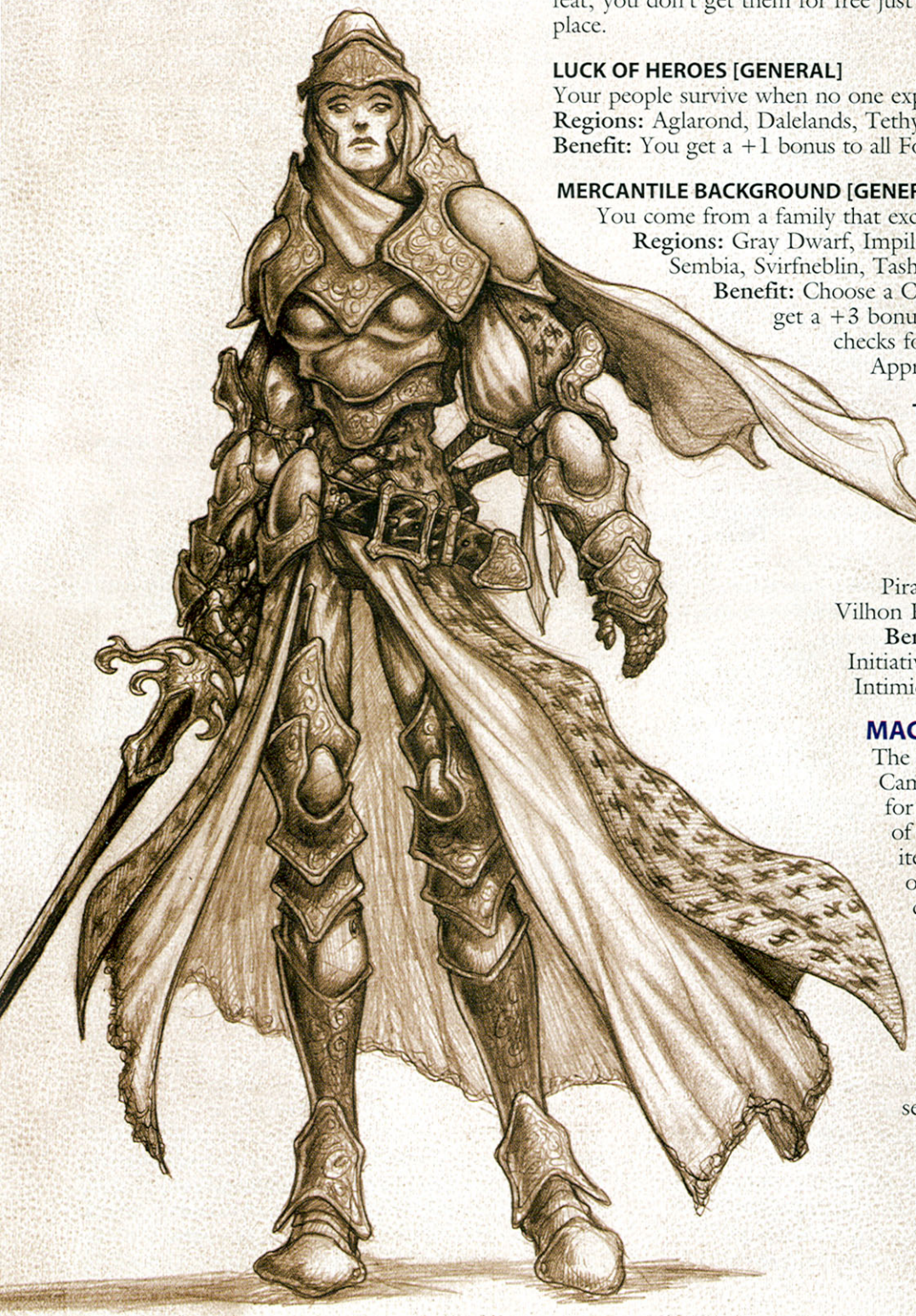
PRINCESS REGENT
OF CORMYR
MATT WILSON



FEATS

The new FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign setting has more than fifty new feats. One of the new concepts we developed is the regional feat: a feat you can only get if you come from a particular area or study with people from there. As the RPGA® NETWORK'S LIVING CITY™ campaign is very popular and takes place in the Realms, we decided to help out those LC players converting their characters over to the new D&D by providing three new Realms feats, all of which are available to natives of the Vast (and, you'll note, a few other places). These regional feats use a feat slot just like any other feat; you don't get them for free just for being from a particular place.

LUCK OF HEROES [GENERAL]

Your people survive when no one expects them to come through.
Regions: Aglarond, Dalelands, Tethyr, the Vast.
Benefit: You get a +1 bonus to all Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.

MERCANTILE BACKGROUND [GENERAL]

You come from a family that excels at a particular trade.
Regions: Gray Dwarf, Impiltur, Lake of Steam, Lantan, Sembia, Svirfneblin, Tashalar, Tethyr, Thesk, the Vast.
Benefit: Choose a Craft or Profession skill. You get a +3 bonus to all Craft or Profession checks for that skill and a +3 bonus to Appraise checks.

THUG [GENERAL]

Your people know how to get the jump on the competition and push other people around.
Regions: Calimshan, Dragon Coast, Moonsea, Pirate Isles, Unther, the Vast, Vilhon Reach, Waterdeep.
Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Initiative checks and a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks.

MAGIC ITEMS

The FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting is well-known for its magic, so here are some of the more popular magic items from Myth Drannor and other regions. Seeing how we converted these items should give you an idea of the process for converting other Realms magic and help you do the same for the other items your characters wield until you can get your hands on the new campaign setting book.

***Blueglow moss*:** *Blueglow moss* is a magical plant growth powered by the mythal and imbued with many healing abilities. At night it glows with blue *faerie fire*, and a creature that rests upon a bed of blueglow moss is cured of 1d4 points of damage for every continuous hour spent there. If 6 or more continuous hours are spent upon the moss bed, the following effects occur:

- *remove disease*
- the use of *darkvision* at will, ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- the ability to *levitate* self at will (naked self only after first 6-hour interval, increasing by 25 pounds per interval to a maximum of 1,000 pounds), ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- use of *detect poison* at will, plus awareness of body to immediately recognize attacks, infestations, diseases, or other affronts to the body when they might otherwise be concealed (such as anaesthetic attacks by certain blood-draining creatures), ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- +2 resistance bonus to saving throws against petrification and polymorph effects, ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- a *regenerate* spell (requires 12 hours of exposure, cumulative but with no more than 1 full day in-between exposures).

Blueglow moss cannot survive outside of a mythal and cannot be created independent of spells that create a mythal.

***Dove's Harp*:** This type of item's original name has been lost, and its current name derives from Dove Falconhand, who owns such a harp. This is a masterwork harp, triangular in shape, with 20 to 36 strings. When it is played, all within 20 feet of the harp are temporarily cured of any insanity (as if a *greater restoration* were in effect) and are protected by a *calm emotions* spell. Those who listen to it for 2 rounds or more receive a *cure light wounds* spell, although this power can only affect a being once every tenday. While its magic is being invoked, the harp and harpist radiate *light*. Use of the harp requires the Perform (harp) skill. *Caster Level:* 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *calm emotions*, *greater restoration*, *healing circle*, *light*; *Market Price:* 45,000 gp.

***Fanged Mask*:** This half-mask is like one worn to a masquerade party, but the bottom edge has numerous sharp-looking catlike teeth. The wearer can use the mask bite in combat for 1d4 points of damage (assuming the wearer's bite attack doesn't already do normal damage) and the mask is +1 weapon. A bitten creature must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. *Caster Level:* 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *spiritual weapon*; *Market Price:* 4,302 gp.

***Harper Pin*:** Harper pins are fashioned from silver that has been magically made as hard as adamantine (hardness 20, 9 hit points, +5 on all saving throws). Their wearer is protected by the following constant effects: immune to *magic missiles*, *nondetection*, *protection from elements*(electricity), *undetectable alignment*, and +5 resistance bonus to saves against mind-affecting effects. Some harper pins turn black and make discordant jangling sounds when worn by evil beings. *Caster Level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *nondetection*, *protection from elements*, *resistance*, *shield*, *undetectable alignment* (plus *detect evil* and *ghost sound* for harper pins that respond to an evil bearer); *Market Price:* 75,750 gp (78,750 gp for the version that reacts to an evil bearer).

***Jump Dagger*:** When grasped, this *+1 dagger* acts as a *ring of feather falling*, and also allows the one holding it to make one *jump* (useable every other round). If the dagger is touched to an object weighing 5 pounds or less, the wielder can use the weapon's *jump* power to gently propel the item up to 30 feet in any direction (usually used to pass weapons, keys, or valuables to someone else). If this power is used against an object held by a creature, consider the attack a Strike a Weapon action, and if successful have the targeted object's owner make a Will save (DC 11) to avoid the effect; if the save is failed the creature may make a Strength check (DC 15) to grab or hold onto the item, preventing its loss. *Caster Level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *jump*, *mage hand*; *Market Price:* 16,052 gp.

***Mirror Mask*:** This mask is circular, with dark lines radiating outward from the point between the eyes. The wearer gains a +5 resistance bonus to all saves against gaze attacks and spells that work through sight (such as *flare*, pattern spells, a vampire's *domination* ability, and so on). Furthermore, any creature that views the wearer's face while the mask is worn sees their own face rather than the wearer's. *Caster Level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *change self*, *resistance*; *Market Price:* 8,759 gp, *Weight:* 1 pound.

***Purple Dragon Ring*:** This item is a brass ring engraved with Purple Dragon symbol of the Obarskyr royal family. The wearer may use it to create *light* once per round, either on the ring or up to 40' away; this effect lasts 10 minutes, and (unlike the *light* cantrip) is not dispellable by the ring. Its second power is a combined *detect magic* and *detect poison* power activated by command word (usually inscribed on the inside of the ring, and typically "Bonthar"); when this power is activated and the ring touched to a food or drink, it glows an eerie gold-green if the substance is poisonous and a bright blue if it is enchanted (including potions), although the ring cannot identify what sort of poison or magic is present.

These rings are normally found only in the hands of the Purple Dragons of Cormyr (of lionar rank or higher), the royal family of that nation, or by individuals performing special missions on behalf of the crown. The Purple Dragons use them to protect the royal family from assassination attempts by poison, and also to verify that merchants claiming the sale of magic potions are not being fraudulent. Over 4,000 of these rings are known to have been made, and there are said to be stores of them in all three of Cormyr's major cities in case many are needed in an emergency. It is likely that there are

CALADNEI
ROYAL MAGICIAN
OF CORMYR
MATT WILSON

rings with similar functions in circulation, created for nobles or merchants fearing poison or trickery. *Caster Level:* 1st; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*; *Market Price:* 2,125 gp.

***Ring of Dragons*:** These brass rings are created by the Cult of the Dragon and are greatly prized by the higher tiers of its organization. There are about 70 in existence; some look like snakes or dragons biting their own tails. The wearer can use the following abilities:

- verbally or telepathically communicate with any true dragon
- cast a figment of a dragon (as *silent image*) once per day within 60 feet of himself; the dragon resembles any dragon the user has personally seen (this power is typically used as a recognition symbol or a diversion)
- transmit a call to a named dracolich or evil dragon; the target knows the wearer's location and can home in on the call if they choose to respond, although there is no compulsion to do so (the call remains active until the ring is removed, the wearer dismisses the call, or the wearer dies).

Caster Level: 15th; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *detect thoughts*, *sending*, *silent image*, *tongues*; *Market Price:* 100,000 gp.

***Singing Sword*:** These silver greatswords are believed to have been created for use by the Harpers. When drawn, they sing loudly and constantly, although the singing can be countered normally by a skilled bard, a *silence* spell, and so on. As long as the bearer can hear the sword's song, she gains a +3 morale bonus to hit and damage (the sword has only a +1 enhancement bonus). Furthermore, she gains a +5 morale bonus to saves against mind-affecting spells and effects (and the only sort of emotion spell that can affect the wielder is *rage*). The sword's song quells shriekers, negates the song effects of harpies within 100 feet, and once per day can act as an *enthrall* spell to creatures with 2 or fewer hit dice (and affecting them with a *suggestion* spell if they fail a second saving throw). Some of these weapons are intelligent and chaotic good aligned. *Caster Level:* 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bless*, *enthrall*, *suggestion*, creator must have 3 ranks of Perform (the chaotic good intelligent singing swords must be created by a being of that alignment); *Market Price:* 9,585 gp.

***Spectral Blade*:** Fashioned from the bone of a creature that died violently, this appears to be just a sword hilt

made of bone. When grasped by a creature a "blade" of light similar to *faerie fire* appears. The blade has no attack bonus but is considered a touch attack; any target struck is affected by a *chill touch* spell. Different varieties of spectral blades have been created to resemble many different bladed weapons, from daggers to greatswords.
Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *chill touch*; *Market Price:* 10,000 gp.

***Winged Mask*:** The edges of this full-face mask are made to resemble feathers or wings. The wearer can *fly* at will, but glows with white *light* whenever this ability is used. The mask can only carry the wearer and 50 pounds of other material. If grappled or weighted down in mid-flight, the wearer is borne to the ground under the effects of a *feather fall*.
Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *feather fall*, *fly*, *light*; *Market Price:* 36,000 gp; Weight: 1 pound.

***Skull Mask*:** This mask is shaped like a skull and painted black around the eyes. When worn, its transforms the wearer's visage to look like an actual skull. The wearer gains a +4 morale bonus to saving throws against disease, fear effects, and paralysis, and is immune to life draining attacks. The wearer immediately recognizes any creature seen as alive, dead, or undead, or inanimate (never alive, such as a lifelike statue). Undead are drawn to the wearer of a *skull mask*, attacking that creature in preference to all others.
Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *deathwatch*, *detect undead*, *negative energy protection*, *remove fear*; *Market Price:* 50,000 gp
Weight: 1 pound.

***Staff of Night*:** The staff of black wood carved with runes of darkness, stars, and night, with one resembling an umber hulk. The staff has the following powers:
- immunity to the confusing gaze power of umber hulks (no charges)
- *darkvision*
- low-light vision (duration as if casting the *darkvision* spell)
- *dispel magic* (only works against light-creating spells such as *light*, *continual flame*, and so on)
- *darkness*
- *summon monster VI* (summons one umber hulk, only, useable only once every tenday, 2 charges)

If the summoned umber hulk is slain, the staff crumbles to dust.
Caster Level: 11th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Staff, *darkness*, *darkvision*, *dispel magic*, *summon monster VI*; *Market Price:* 50,000 gp.

***Staff of Vision*:** This staff has the following powers:
- *darkvision* (1 charge)
- *remove blindness* (2 charges)
- *see invisibility* (1 charge)
- *true seeing* (2 charges)

The staff has an unusual side effect that using it is mentally tiring, and each use requires a DC 12 Will save or suffer 1 point of temporary Intelligence damage.
Caster Level: 12th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Staff, *darkvision*, *see invisibility*, *remove blindness*, *true seeing*; *Market Price:* 24,000 gp.

War Wizard Cloak (Weathercloak): These full cut, black cloaks hang to mid-boot on your average human. Cut to overlap on the chest and cover the wearer's arms, they have a high collar and a separate pull-over hood. They are embroidered with a white upraised human palm in a circle on the right collar, a purple dragon on the left collar, and another on the center point of the hood (so it is displayed to the rear when the hood is pulled back). The cloak constantly provides the wearer with the following benefits: *endure elements* (cold), *darkvision*, and *feather fall* (self only). Once per day, the wearer may use *dimension door*, *lesser ironguard*, *protection from arrows*, and *sending*.

These cloaks are normally only worn by Cormyrian war-wizards, nobles, or specially chosen agents, although with the number of dead war-wizards caused by the war against the dragon Nalavara, it is likely that some have been looted from corpses and can be found in other hands.
Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *darkvision*, *dimension door*, *endure elements*, *feather fall*, *lesser ironguard*, *protection from arrows*, *sending*; *Market Price:* 30,375 gp.

SPELLS

As with magic items, the Realms is known for its unusual spells. The *war wizard cloak* (above) refers to the *lesser ironguard* spell (a converted form of the old *ironguard* dweomer), so this spell is included here to allow you to fully utilize that item's abilities.

LESSER IRONGUARD

Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 5
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (Harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (Harmless)

The caster or a creature touched becomes immune to nonmagical metal. Metal items (including metal weapons) simply pass through the affected creature, and the target of the spell can walk through metal barriers such as iron bars. Magical or enchanted metal affects the creature normally, as do spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects. Attacks delivered by metal items (such as poison on a dagger) affect the creature normally. If the spell expires while metal is inside an affected creature, the metal object is shunted out of its body (or the body away from the metal, if it is an immovable object like a set of iron bars). The affected creature and the object take 1d6 points of damage as a result (ignoring the object's hardness rating for determining damage to it).

Because the target of the spell passes through metal, it can ignore armor and hardness bonuses on opponents it attacks with unarmed attacks.

Material components: a tiny shield of wood, glass, or crystal.

A WAYFARERS GUIDE TO THE FORGOTTEN REALMS®

BY ED GREENWOOD

Oparl is a garden to some, a decadent snakepit to others—and to folk like me, it's just the cesspit I live in. Worse than some, a lot better than others, and possessing a stink all its own....

JASIIRA HAULIPAT, ADVENTURESS-ROYAL OF OPARL, IN CONVERSATION WITH VOLO, YEAR OF THE ARCH

Our tour of the Border Kingdoms this month comes to a place that already is what Blackalblade in Ondeeme is striving to be: a tiny, perfect pastiche of the wealth and decadence of the most wealthy heights of Calishite society; Oparl, capital of Bedorn.

OPARL

Bedorn has long been the little-known private playground of rich Calishite satraps. Here they can arrange month-long revels or dangerous games involving real monsters and champions fighting to the death, host beast-hunts, or have landscapes and vistas rearranged to please themselves.

In the heart of landscaped and splendid Bedorn is the quiet cluster of pleasure-palaces known as Oparl. Officially a "town," it lacks mayor, watch, shopkeepers, and even dungsweepers. There are no walls, no market, and no signs proclaiming the name of the place.

So what beyond scant welcome will the traveler find in Oparl? Nigh-on sixty large and fanciful buildings, each surrounded by its own walled grounds, crowded together on four knolls, providing views over much of Bedorn. These mansions are all large and grandiose, but otherwise differ widely in look and design. They sit at the heart of the garden that is Bedorn, raising spires that catch the sunset, and can then be seen far away across the Border Kingdoms.

"Like most gardens," a veteran Borderer commented, "Oparl is in need of constant grooming. Work crews hustle in to build a new this and shore up an old that. Another spire built by an idiot falls on them, necessitating the hiring of another work crew to throw up an even more outlandish spire in its place—preferably something larger, and more gaudy, and even more useless. See this continuing, spurred by rivalries in bad taste for some sixty summers, and you can begin to picture Oparl."

THE GUARD BELOW

Until agreements were reached as to the flows of sewers and streams that run below the town, battles and floodings were common, but Oparl today is a friendly place where each owner pursues his or her own delights. A common Guard Below was created to keep thieves and monsters of all sorts from invading the rich houses overhead through the common sewer network (wherein the streams and rivers are pumped to fountains and bathing-pools in each house, before being used to flush the jakes down into waist-deep sewers).

This force is augmented by hired adventurers who are often deliberately tempted into use as unwitting "test foes" for the standing Guard, but who have also served with distinction on occasion in repelling determined assaults on the glittering wealth above.

The Guard Below grows used to fighting in waist-deep filth. Its most senior officers, the Cotahars, carry *wands of paralyzation* and potions whose dosages grant powers akin to *fly* spells. These are used sparingly; the Guard spends far more time waiting patiently in the dark, wet reek, watching the so-called float alarms. Suspended below the surface of the water in patterns intruders can't help but disturb, these giant egg-like bladders are tethered between strings, the disturbances of which cause gongs to chime and Guards to become *very* alert.

BREACHING THE FONT OF GOLD

Assaults by air are more common than through the sewers, but against such perils every grand house is on its own. Powerful spells on almost all of the palace exteriors inhibit fires, and most of the grand houses (unless one happens across a folly or outlying stables or greenhouse) have alert, liveried guard forces.

Pirate and nomadic (Shaarim) invasions are rare things these days, but older guards can remember when they were all too frequent. They also recall some daringly successful snatch-and-pillage expeditions mounted by adventurers, at least two of which took advantage of mock aerial battles staged by jaded palace owners to approach undetected.

That isn't to say that some guards don't grow bored, or even slide into near-slumber at

their posts, but in Oparl, there's seldom just one line of watchful defenders for intruders to slip past.

Most of the great houses of Oparl stand in sunken gardens or lush lawns of moss or greengrass. The outer fringes of these yards are usually furnished with alarm-trips, if not actual traps. A few manors are owned by folk who collect dangerous beasts, and think it great sport to let them prowl the grounds, devouring intruders. Such houses are all too likely to have "forgotten" back gates left ajar, or "unnoticed" cracks in the walls that allow a slender thief to slip through or easily climb. At least one Oparlan manor has a vampire roaming its gardens; she likes to seduce handsome intruders before she slays them, and over time has built herself a small legion of lesser vampires who do her bidding. Another house is rumored to have unmarked one-way *gates* to various unsavory Outer Planes on its grounds, awaiting the unwary who lack protective rings that keep the *gates* from functioning.

A few of the grand houses in Oparl have sick or now-impoverished (or even dead or undead) owners, and have begun to crumble. Visiting thieves and adventurers can easily gain entrance to such places, but will discover the hard way that the private defense forces of adjacent palaces have usually placed alarms so as to be made aware of their presence.

HOME SWEET PALACE

Many of the palace owners are as powerful as they are eccentric and wealthy; not a few are archmages (the names Asjyanyl Mrothlok of Delthuntle and Ilcanorr of Luthcheq spring to mind) who can mount mighty defenses of their own if their guards fall. Certain well-known archmages have speculated publicly that tiny Oparl may boast more animated guardians and other items of enchantment than any other settlement in all Faerûn. Ilcanorr can (and has) whelmed a flight of gargoyles to tear apart unwanted intruders—and one resident of Oparl (the aging dame Rallowthiira Ammarglas, a retired courtesan of Tashluta clinging rather grimly to her long, now silver hair and the wrinkled remains of her once-stunning looks) is said to have the means to summon a dragon to aid her in battle, if need be. There's even a factory of sorts nearby (Tantar's Fine Enchantments, not far east of Oparl) where minor items of magic are made in numbers, and Oparlan golems are repaired.

A feature of Oparl that is both a strength and weakness is its unwritten code of privacy. Guards may work together against intruder invasions, but they may know very little about the true identities and names of their employers. Thus, a thief coming to Oparl may have no easy way to learn just which of the palaces in front of him is the one built by the Grand High Master of Gems from Reth as his country house, or to even guess at the capabilities of the occupants of any palace.

At the same time, the lord of one manor may have no idea that his nearest neighbor to the west is a retired crime-lord from Impiltur, with deadly bodyguards in plenty, and hired slayers combing Faerûn in search of him—or that his nearest neighbor to the east is a necromancer who has surrounded himself with undead of his own devising . . . or rather *did*, until a doppleganger managed to slay him and take his place, only to find itself dwelling in the midst of undead it can neither control nor keep from exploring outside the walls of the estate. . . .

A few manors are owned by folk who collect dangerous beasts, and think it great sport to let them prowl the grounds, devouring intruders.

Another palace, looking like a castle ready for war, may be home to a querulous, scuttling bookworm of a retired merchant. The pink, slender-spired faerie castle across the way may be the abode of a battle-famous warpriest of Tempus who desires something a little different when he's relaxing. Yonder mansion may house a rich noble who's always wanted to lead an army to war, and so has assembled one within its walls to await any emergency, whereas that dark, stark tower may be home to an archmage who dwells alone in her dotage, and does no more violence than to crush roaches and spiders with blows of her spellbook if they run across her feet while she reads.

While Oparl has a social life of sorts, it tends to be a gathering of spoiled and imperious (and therefore quarrelsome when their desires crash into those of a fellow haughty "noble") people who—beyond peering, gossiping, and sneering—largely ignore each other, keeping inside their walls and entertaining their own guests. If revels should happen to befall at the same time and disputes develop between the guests of one and the guests of the other, the hosts may begin a round of duels and a feud that lasts for decades...without even really knowing what each other looks like. More on this curious haven of humble happiness next issue.

Feats Don't Fail Me Now!

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS TIPS FROM A PLAYTESTER

BY MARK H. WALDRON ILLUSTRATIONS BY VINCE LOCKE

You're ready to create your first Third Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® character. Sure, you know all about abilities. The classes and races you want are all there. And skills? Well, they're like better versions of the old Second Edition proficiencies. But feats? Feats are new. Feats are different. Are they important? You bet they are.

In the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, feats make the character. Other than allocating your ability scores to Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma, no decision is as important to how you play your character than the feats you choose. Feats reinforce what sort of character you choose to play. Feats give your character a new capability or improve an existing one. And, unlike rolling your ability scores, there's no random element involved. Making the best choices is entirely up to you.

This article will highlight the utility of the feats in the Player's Handbook for each of the character classes. While the advice provided here has been garnered through active playtesting of Third Edition over the past year and a half, it's far from exhaustive. The combinations and possibilities are boundless.

Ultimately, every player will determine the combinations and paths that provide the most personal enjoyment. Far from "official" advice, these notes are simply the collected musings of a grizzled old playtester. Do with them what you will.

FIGHTERS

For a fighter, feats are everything. The fighter can be played as an armored killing machine, a swashbuckling hero, or a chivalric jousting knight. The feats you select will reinforce your roleplaying choice by granting bonuses appropriate to your character type. There are a lot of tempting feats, though. If you're interested in creating the most powerful fighter, you'll want to be very careful to select the right ones.

Before choosing your feats, decide which sort of fighter you'd like to play, and plan out in advance what feats you'll want to take. Be sure to think beyond character creation. Since many feats require other feats before they may be chosen, you'll want to plan several levels in advance. A human fighter has six feats to choose by the time he reaches 4th level, allowing plenty of options and definition.

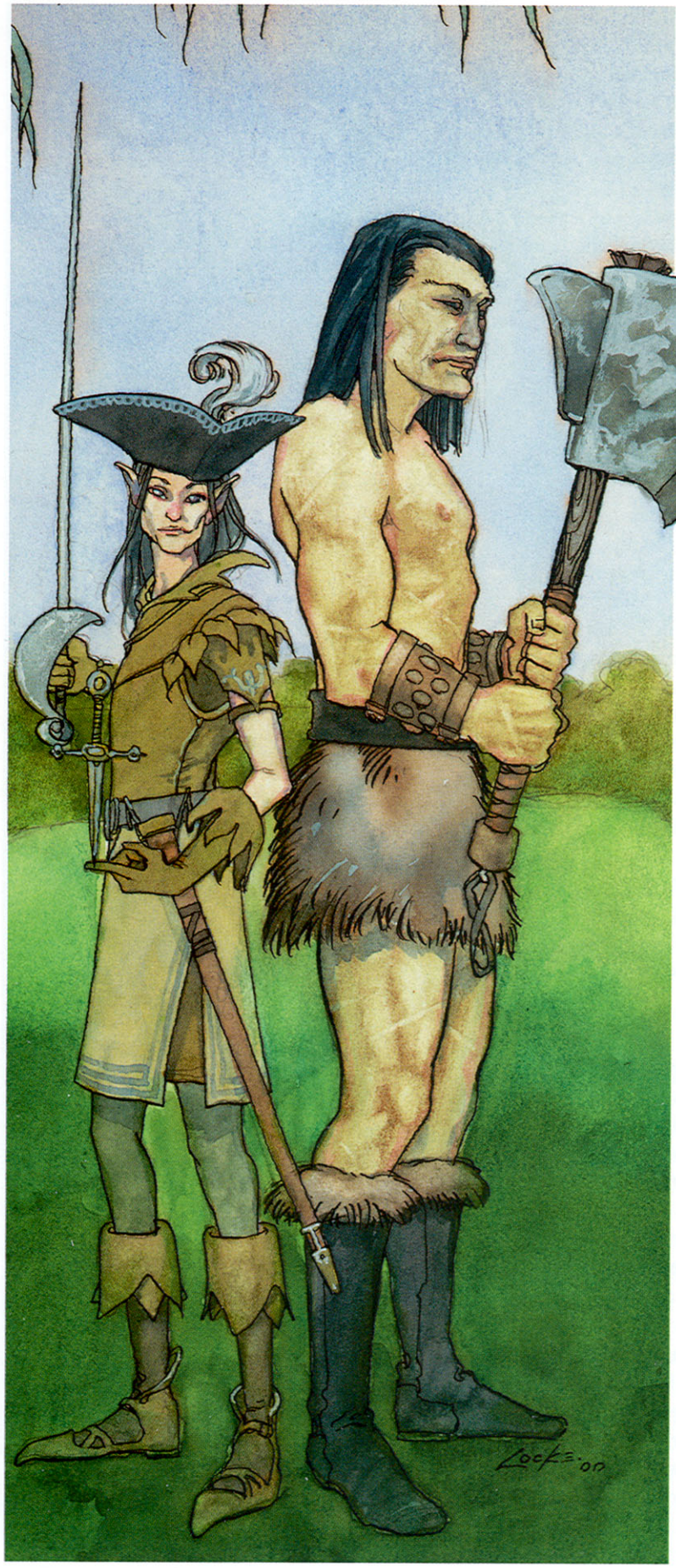
Consider your fighter's primary weapon. Want to create an expert marksman? You'll probably want to follow a "path" focusing on bows or another missile weapon. The obvious choice is to select Point Blank Shot, and successively choose from among Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, and Shot on the Run.

In Third Edition, every weapon has a threat range to help determine when a critical hit will come into play. For example, the heavy pick is a deadly weapon when a critical hit is scored, dealing x4 damage to the unhappy victim. However, the heavy pick threatens a critical hit only on a roll of a natural 20, while other weapons offer a much greater chance to threaten a critical hit. At higher levels, you can improve the threat range with the Improved Critical feat. On the other hand, combining Improved Critical with a falchion allows your character to deal 4d4 points of damage frequently, given a threat range of 15 to 20 (six numbers). Ask yourself what's more important, fewer criticals (albeit crushing ones) or more criticals in general. Choose your weapons carefully.

In the new edition, some weapons have a quality known as "reach." This generally means that combatants with reach weapons receive a free attack of opportunity before an opponent can even close to attack range. Combat Reflexes is an excellent feat for a fighter armed with a reach weapon, as it allows attacks of opportunity against multiple opponents in a single round.

Quick Draw is a great choice for a fighter armed with a reach weapon, as many such weapons cannot be used against an adjacent foe. The reach weapon provides free attacks before an enemy attacker gets close. Then, as a free action, your fighter drops the reach weapon, and (using Quick Draw) draws a sword or other close action weapon as a second free action, and can thereafter attack normally.

Ranseur, designed to disarm opponents as well as deal damage, is a particularly good weapon for fighters with the Improved Disarm



Before choosing your feats, decide which sort of fighter you'd like to play.

Feats give your character a new capability or improve an existing one. Making the best choices is entirely up to you.

feat. Spiked chain is a fabulous weapon that has reach and allows attacks against adjacent foes. Of course, it's also an exotic weapon, requiring a feat of its own to use without a pretty hefty penalty. Certain weapons that provide a great deal of damage potential, such as the dwarven waraxe, also require a specific Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat in order to use them in conjunction with a shield without triggering grave penalties.

Like weapons, armor is a vital consideration in how you play your fighter. As heavy armor reduces speed and inflicts penalties on skills such as Jump and Climb, the swashbuckler probably isn't going to have much of it. What they'll likely have instead is a selection of feats that read much like the stage directions in an Errol Flynn movie: Dodge, Mobility, and Spring Attack. Swashbuckling characters tend to have a high Dexterity to balance their lack of armor. Because Dexterity is a priority, many swashbucklers don't have particularly impressive Strength scores, making Weapon Finesse a good choice for them.

Heavily armored fighters usually want to deliver impressive damage in toe-to-toe hacking. An excellent "path" to follow for the hack-n-slash fighter is the so-called Power Attack path, which eventually includes Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder, and Great Cleave.

Another path worth considering for the knightly fighter or characters taking their queues from Mongols, Huns, or Saracens starts with Mounted Combat, and includes Mounted Archery, Trample, Ride-By Attack, and Spirited Charge.

A more convoluted path leads to the dreaded Whirlwind Attack, worth noting because it requires more prerequisites than any other feat. Whirlwind Attack is an awesome capability, allowing a normal attack against every adjacent opponent. Fighters with Whirlwind Attack dream of being surrounded by enemy hordes.

BARBARIANS

Barbarians receive fewer feats than fighters, but because they seldom wear heavy armor, the advice provided above for swashbuckling fighters applies to them, as well. Additionally, there are two feat paths you might want to choose for your barbarian. The first will build you a fast and deadly warrior. Begin with Dodge, Expertise, Mobility, and Spring Attack, and top it off with Whirlwind Attack. Don't want to run around so much? Try Weapon Focus, Combat Reflexes, and Improved Critical. Both paths focus on the barbarian's key strength—her ability to rage. Though Expertise, a feat that allows you to apply part of your attack bonus to your armor class, can't be used during a barbarian's rage, Dodge, Mobility, and Whirlwind Attack can. Using a greatsword or heavy pick in a rage when combined with Improved Critical allows for staggering damage potential. On the other hand, small weapons or the rapier, which often go hand-in-hand with the Weapon Finesse feat, are a poor choice. When raging, the barbarian gets a tremendous Strength bonus. Your feats (and weapon choice, for that matter) should capitalize on that fact.

BARDS

To a bard, music is life. If silenced, a bard's abilities and spells are useless. Silent Spell, perfectly suited to counter this weakness, isn't available to bards. What's a musician to do? Make sure you can fight, preferably with ranged weapons, since you're not likely to last long in a toe-to-toe fight. Consider Weapon Focus in a ranged weapon, followed up by Point Blank Shot. In most cases, however, a bard will be casting spells, making Combat Casting all but a necessity. Consider Leadership at 6th level to gain a cohort and begin developing an entourage of supporters.

CLERICS

Faced with a large selection of useful feats, players of clerics must focus on what "type" of cleric they'd like to play. Traditionally, clerics come in two varieties: the "frontline" fighting cleric who uses his spells to "juice up" himself or others prior to combat or the "cure-aid-prayer" cleric who casts support spells during combat, keeping the party going. The new rules add a host of clerical combat and summoning spells, but the primary question of whether or not the character will be in the thick of combat remains.

The advice for the front-liners follows that which I've outlined for fighters. However, clerics gain feats at a much slower pace, and (because they're more likely to place their highest score in Wisdom) generally have a lower Dexterity than fighters, which often forces them to wear heavier armor. Fighting clerics with a Dexterity bonus should take Blind-Fight, since many fighters often pass it up and it's a good feat to have in a party. Weapon Focus allows for an extra

Silent Spell is useful when silenced, or when the cleric is operating in an environment in which speaking is difficult, such as under water.

combat edge, and Improved Initiative can help to get the jump on opponents and stay a step ahead of them during combat.

Clerics in a support role should consider metamagic feats. Extend Spell is useful to make spells like *prayer* last an entire battle, or to make spells like *endurance*, or *bull's strength* last several hours (or almost two days, at higher levels). Silent Spell is useful when silenced, or when the cleric is operating in an environment in which speaking is difficult, such as under water. Because metamagic feats usually require the character to prepare spells as if they were of a higher level, beware of selecting these feats too early. Maximize Spell and Quicken Spell, both of which can make for devastating casters, require spells to be prepared at three and four levels higher than normal, respectively. The mid-level cleric who chooses these feats in order to pump up orisons has made a potentially fatal error.

As most item creation feats have a level prerequisite and cost experience points a low-level character can't spare, you'll have a few feats to choose while you're waiting. Combat Casting is a solid choice that will help you avoid getting mauled when casting spells in the thick of battle. If your cleric has a particular weakness thanks to a low statistic, consider a feat that improves saving throws, such as Great Fortitude, Iron Will, and Lightning Reflexes.

DRUIDS

One of the druid's most important powers is her wildshape ability, which allows her to change into animal form. When your druid is fighting with claws and teeth, feats like Ambidexterity and Weapon Focus aren't going to do her a lot of good. Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, and Lightning Reflexes, on the other hand, might come in very handy indeed.

Since druids often exert themselves when outdoors, feats like Endurance and Run make more sense for them than they do for city or dungeon-based adventuring classes. Depending upon how willing the druid is to add a little weight to the back of his animal friend, his skills with animals make Mounted Combat a very interesting selection.

MONKS

As part of his class abilities, a monk receives Unarmed Strike for free at 1st level. As he advances, Deflect Arrows and Improved Trip likewise come free with the territory. Furthermore, due to a monk's tight focus on unarmed combat, many feats (Combat Casting, for instance) offer few benefits to him. This leaves monks with the smallest range of options for really appropriate feats to choose from. Weapon Finesse, which can be applied to an unarmed strike, capitalizes on the fact that most monks have a high Dexterity score. Add Power Attack to that (assuming you have the requisite 13 Strength) and you won't regret choosing to put a higher score into Dexterity over going for a high Strength.

PALADINS

The paladin has fewer feats available to him than does the fighter, but much of the same advice applies to him, as well. One different aspect to consider is the paladin's special mount, which makes Mounted Combat an excellent choice. Both paladins and clerics must wrestle with whether or not to choose the Extra Turning feat. Unless the character has a particularly poor Charisma (and why would you play a paladin with low Charisma?) or the campaign is set in a horror setting such as Ravenloft, I suggest against giving up that valuable feat slot for such a specialized benefit. As play continues, however, the paladin can maximize his high Charisma score by choosing the Leadership feat (described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). His charms will serve him well with a host of cohorts and followers.

RANGERS

Rangers get the Track feat for free, and, in essence, gain Ambidexterity, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Improved Two-Weapon Fighting for free as they progress through the levels. Due to the ranger's preference for light armor, both Dodge and Mobility can prove useful. In order to counter the minimum –2/-2 attack penalty for fighting with two weapons, the ranger might consider taking Weapon Focus in a light weapon, and use that same weapon in both the main and off hand. For example, even at first level, a ranger with Weapon Focus (short sword) is able to attack twice per round at a minimum of +0/+0 wielding two short swords. If Dexterity is high and Strength lower, take Weapon Finesse in short sword as well for a particularly potent combination. Alertness and Quick Draw can prove useful for rangers, as well.

ROGUES

The focus for rogues should be on exploiting advantages. Rogues are sneaky and find it easy to hide in the dark. Blind-Fight puts opponents at a huge disadvantage. Since many of a rogue's skills are based on Dexterity (and since few enough are based on Strength that many players will "short" that ability score), Weapon Focus is a must-have for nearly every rogue. The new edition's introduction of the rogue's sneak attack ability is only as good as your ability to catch your foe in an instance in which he's flanked or has lost his Dexterity bonus to his armor class, such as when he's caught flat-footed before his first turn in combat. Take advantage of this with the Improved Initiative feat, which (in combination with a good Dexterity bonus) helps to ensure that your

rogue goes before her enemies in most combats.

Since it's unlikely your rogue will be using a shield, you'll have an extra hand free. Give that hand something to do with the Ambidexterity, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Improved Two-Weapon Fighting path. By the time you're finished, your Dexterity bonus should more than offset the penalties to your attacks for using both hands.

Though the rogue has improved combat capabilities in Third Edition (thanks mostly to the new sneak attack ability), he's still not a fighter. Dodge and Mobility are useful for getting out of scrapes.

Rogues have lots of skill points, but few feats. Avoid Skill Focus. You don't need it.

SORCERERS AND WIZARDS

To state the obvious, you're not going toe-to-toe with anyone. Forget about Power Attack. Priority number one, particularly at low levels, is survival. Before selecting your feats, consider your spell selection. Do you have access to a good defensive spell, such as *mage armor* or *mirror image*? Good protective spell planning, in combination with defensive feats such as Dodge, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, or Toughness will often be enough to get you through the difficult-to-survive early levels.

If Dexterity is particularly high, wizards and sorcerers might want to consider choosing Weapon Focus for their ray spells. In this case, the spellcaster becomes a walking ray gun, with spells such as *ray of frost*, *ray of enfeeblement*, or the ray form of *Otiluke's frozen sphere*.

As the sorcerer or wizard gains levels, life becomes less precarious, and metamagic and item creation feats begin to look like better and better choices. Silent Spell is good for many occasions, countering the magical silence that so often stymies spellcasters, as well as situations in which the caster is gagged, underwater, or otherwise unable to speak. If the spell requires only a verbal component, such as *blindness*, *dimension door*, or *Otto's irresistible dance*, Silent Spell allows a wizard or sorcerer to cast it even if bound, gagged, and stuffed in a locker.

In order to counter the minimum –2/-2 attack penalty for fighting with two weapons, the ranger might consider taking Weapon Focus in a light weapon, and use that same weapon in both the main and off hand.

Metamagic feats are particularly good for sorcerers. Whereas a wizard must choose beforehand which spells to prepare as extended, heightened, or empowered, the sorcerer can choose "on the fly" which metamagic-improved spells to cast. Most sorcerers I know love to take *fireball*. Cast it as a 5th-level spell with the Empower Spell feat to get even more bang for your buck, so to speak. Cast *mirror image*, *bull's strength*, or *cat's grace* as a 4th-level spell to get many images or a great jump in ability scores.

I recommend choosing Empower Spell over Maximize Spell. Empower is less costly (requiring the spell in question to be prepared at two levels higher than the spell's actual level) than Maximize (which requires preparing the spell at three levels higher), and holds the potential for more staggering numbers.

Wizard characters should keep item creation feats in mind. At higher levels, when the experience points and gold can be spared, wizards can equip themselves and their party with just the right magic item using feats like Craft Wand or Forge Ring. Know you're leaving for the Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl and have a couple days to prepare? Forge a *ring of warmth*.

Tired of watching the barbarian in the party get wounded repeatedly thanks to his lousy armor class? Create a suit of *+2 leather armor* for him. Given their greater variety of spells, wizards are generally better able to meet the spellcasting prerequisites of a wider range of magic items than are sorcerers. On the other hand, Craft Wand is a great choice to supplement a sorcerer's offensive power.

Low-level spells have lower save DCs (which make them easier to resist), while stronger foes have better saving throws. Further, many of the more challenging monsters have spell resistance. As their careers progress, spellcasters therefore get less and less utility out of spells like *charm person* or *hypnotic pattern*. What's a caster to do? Both wizards and sorcerers should consider Spell Penetration at higher levels, when they're more likely to meet powerful opponents with spell resistance. Mix Spell Penetration with Spell Focus, and you're left with spells that not only break through spell resistance more often, but are more difficult to save against, too.

Finally, wizards must decide whether or not to select Spell Mastery. Essentially, this feat provides a lifeline for a wizard without access to a spellbook, or allows the wizard to keep his spellbook tucked away someplace safe, referring to it only occasionally. Think of Spell Mastery as "wizard insurance." How much risk are you willing to endure? My advice? Take this feat only if your character's current Intelligence modifier is at least +3 or higher. Since the feat allows wizards to "bank" one spell per point in Intelligence bonus, it's just not worth taking up a feat slot for the sake of one or two spells.

After a year of playtesting, that's my advice to you. The Third Edition feat system offers lots of diverse choices. Often, one feat combines with another to make an interesting combination that's not readily apparent, and only comes out with a little experience and experimentation. Take the thoughts presented here and expand on them, tweak them, and make your own deadly combinations and bizarre twists. The possibilities are boundless.

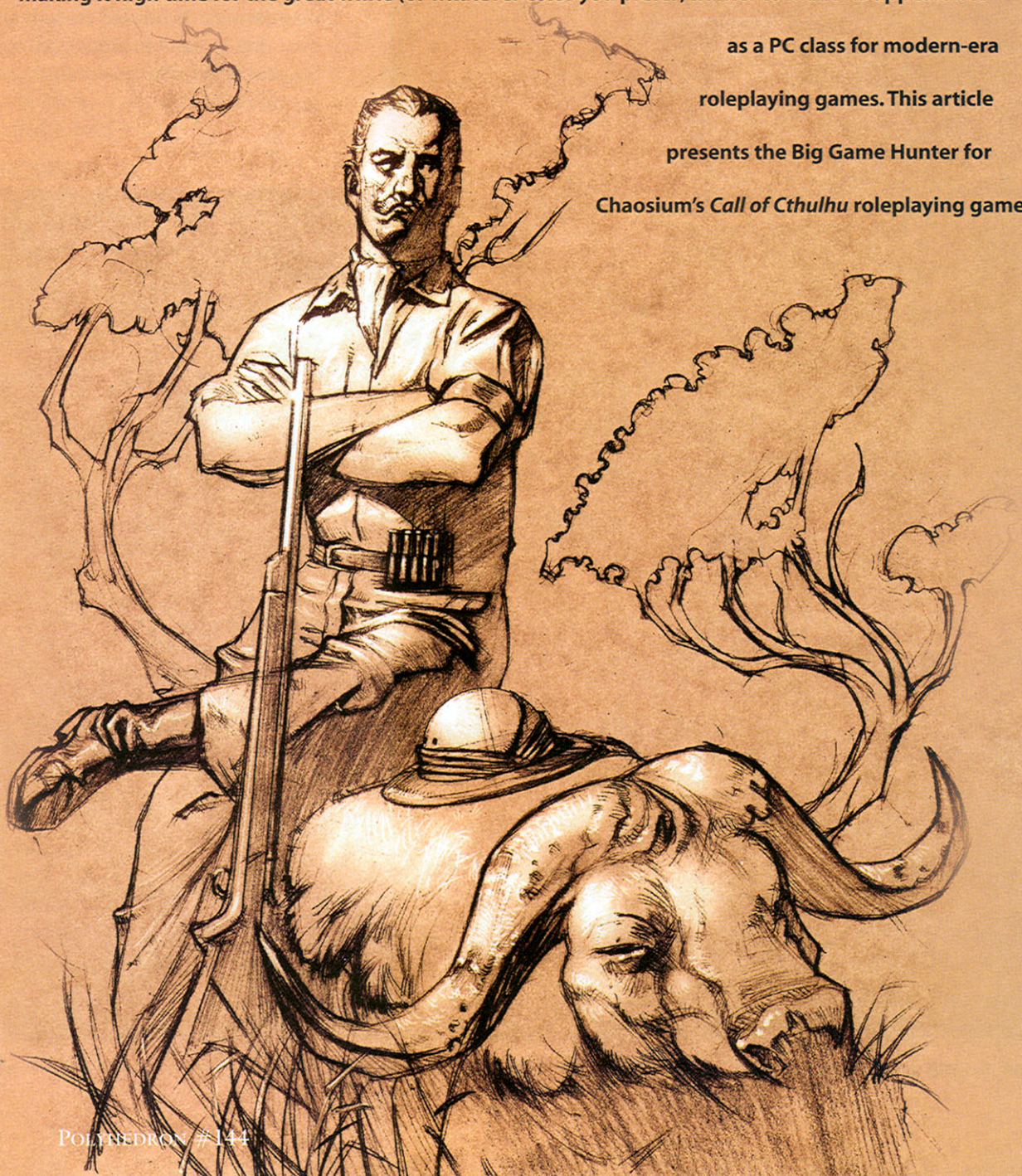
In this case, the spellcaster becomes a walking ray gun. . .

THE BIG GAME HUNTER

A NEW INVESTIGATOR OCCUPATION FOR THE CALL OF CTHULHU GAME

BY GREGORY DETWILER ✝ ILLUSTRATIONS BY CARLO ARELLANO

Because mankind has supported itself by hunting since its earliest days, it comes as no surprise that the hunter is one of the most enduring figures in history and literature. In the tropics, and especially in Africa, the "great white hunter" is one of the best recognized figures of legend and true-life adventure. Films from *The Macomber Affair* to *The Ghost and the Darkness* perpetuate this romantic image, making it high time for the great white (or whatever color you prefer) hunter to make its appearance as a PC class for modern-era roleplaying games. This article presents the Big Game Hunter for Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game.



BACKGROUND

In the United States, the professional hunter has had two main roles: supplying isolated settlements (particularly mining camps and small towns in the Old West prior to the transcontinental railroad) with fresh meat, and acting as a wholesale supplier of meats and hides from the frontier to markets on the east coast. Combat-happy players should jump at the chance to play a big game hunter, as they historically armed themselves with the biggest weaponry available, from the Sharps "Big Fifty" .52 calibre buffalo gun to shotguns nearly as large as bazookas (the latter were used by market hunters to bring down a vast number of edible birds, particularly waterfowl). These woodsmen frequently were "indian-fighers," as well, since many Native American tribes took a dim view of intruders wiping out their food supply.

In Africa, and to a lesser extent throughout the tropics, things were somewhat different. Here, the market hunter was replaced by those who sought the most valuable substance (next to mother-of-pearl) in the natural world: Ivory. The main sources of ivory, elephants and hippos, were naturally larger and more dangerous than American bison, popular for their valuable hides. Ivory was much more valuable than hides, however, and those ivory hunters who lived long enough became very wealthy men.

Another important role of the hunter in Africa was that of the safari guide or game control officer. This is the romanticized figure everyone remembers from books and movies; the muscular, suntanned character clad in boots, shorts, bush hat, and safari jacket, an express rifle in hand, pockets bulging with heavy calibre cartridges.

Because most of the prime big game regions in the tropics eventually became part of the British Empire, it was the British who brought the craft of the big game hunter to its ultimate perfection. The majority of great white hunters were native-born Britons, as well as a large number of white South Africans and Rhodesian settlers of British descent in other parts of Africa. Still, there were a surprisingly large number of Australians, a scattering of Americans (mostly from the US, but including at least one Brazilian), a fair number of Continental Europeans, and a handful of Indians, Pakistanis, and Arabs.

All these men shared several things in common: a love of the chase, excellent marksmanship, and steady nerves. Before the poachers really got going in the 1970s, Africa was full of big game in numbers that are almost unbelievable today. In the second half of the 1940s and the first few years of the 1950s, Swede Eric Rundgren was a game control officer in Kenya's Game Department. His main job was to kill crop-raiding Cape buffalo (famed as Africa's most dangerous big game animal) and elephants, as well as man-eating and livestock-killing lions and leopards. In about seven years, Rundgren set the records for the most lions and Cape buffalo ever slain by a single hunter: 434 lions and 3,000 buffalo, 500 of the latter on a single assignment. If stumbling across a marksman (with the heaviest possible gun in hand) like that isn't a considerable worry for a tropical band of deep ones or a tribe of tcho-tchos, it should be.

Depending on the wealth of the hunter himself, the company that he works for, and the types of clients he accepts, the living conditions of a safari can vary wildly. By the 1920s, the standard time period for *Call of Cthulhu* campaigns, the "champagne safari" was all the rage. All the comforts of home (if you lived in a mansion) were available to the clients, whether they traveled by foot (native bearers commonly carried loads of up to 60 lbs. on their heads), horseback or camel, or in motorized transport.

Incidentally, the term " champagne safari" was often a literal one. No liquors other than champagne would be available unless the safari had motorized transport; it seems wines in general don't travel well when they're being bounced along on the heads of native porters. Bubbly was often used in place of medicinal brandy. One of the most common lethal diseases in the bush was a kidney ailment known as blackwater fever, named so because of the darkening of the victim's urine. The standard cure for this ailment was to have the patient drink one or two bottles of champagne to flush out the kidneys.

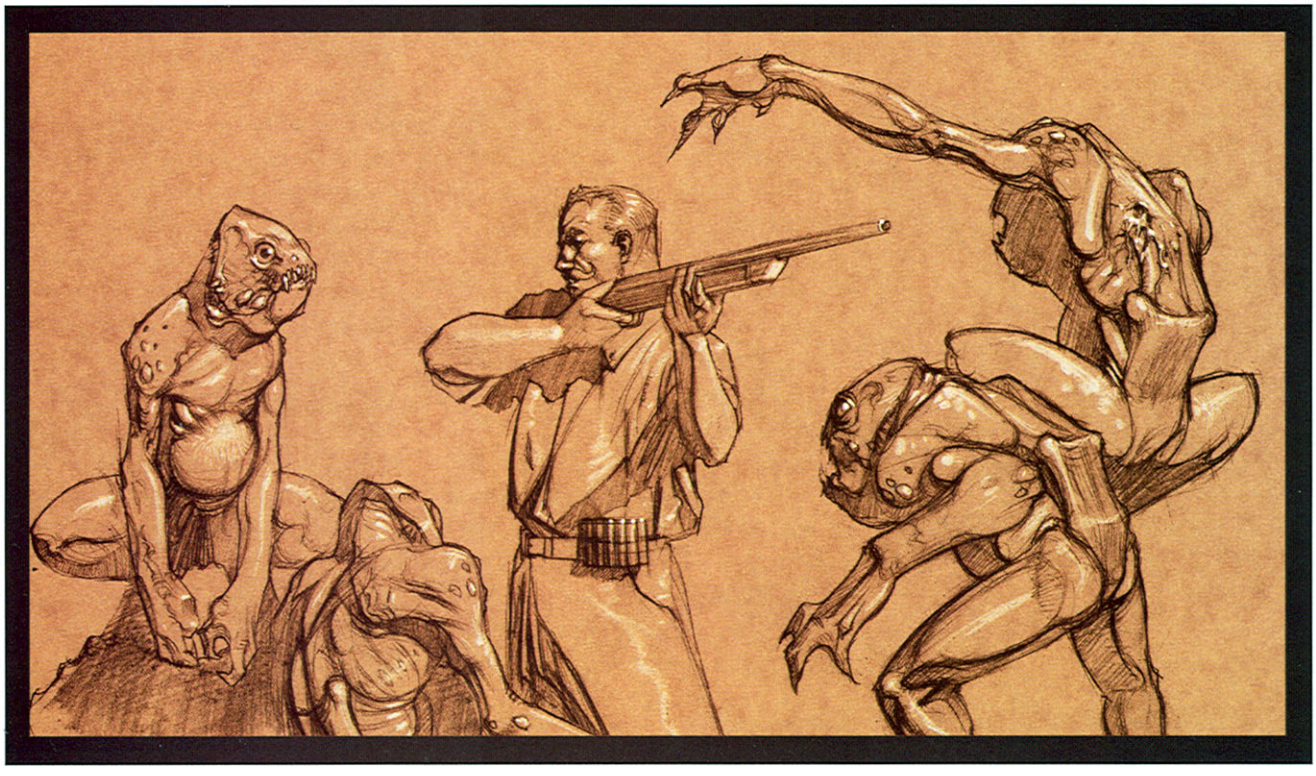
The routine for a "champagne safari" is as follows: A wake-up call before dawn, with a uniformed waiter serving the client tea in bed. This is followed by breakfast in a special mess tent, served by more waiters. The morning's hunt is followed by a literal picnic out in the bush, with "chop boxes" (picnic baskets) filled with fresh game, cheeses, or delicacies of all sorts supplied, fashionably, by the London-based firm of Fortnum and Mason's. After lunch, a siesta helps to ease the hottest part of the day. The hunt resumes at 3:00 P.M. The hunters return at dusk or right after nightfall, and then relax with *hors d'oeuvres* (bone marrow seasoned with pepper was a common delicacy in the bush) and drinks around the campfire. After dinner, the hunters wash in either makeshift showers or a canvas bathtub mounted on a collapsible wooden frame. Once everyone is clean and relaxed, a large formal dinner is served by the ubiquitous uniformed waiters in the light of candles or special pressure lanterns. Combining the roles of a caterer with those of a professional hunter may seem incongruous, but the hunters who worked for the major safari companies had to do precisely that.

One of the advantages of the "champagne safari" and other big-game hunts is that one's clients are invariably wealthy and powerful people, just the sort of folks one would like to have among their list of contacts. A list of VIPs served by African hunters includes former US president Teddy Roosevelt, the future King Edward VIII (who spent a night lost in the bush, thanks to his guide), Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, the millionaire Alfred Vanderbilt (who enjoyed an elephant hunt when he didn't even bag his prey, because it was the first time he was after something that money couldn't buy), ketchup magnate Jack Heinz, war hero Jimmy Doolittle, authors Ernest Hemingway and Robert Ruark, former Texas governor John Connally, aviation legend Charles Lindburgh, and future gorilla expert Diane Fossey. Back in the states, Buffalo Bill led Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, the brother of Czar Alexander II, on a buffalo hunt, with Civil War veterans William T. Sherman and Phil Sheridan in tow.

Aside from vacationing on safari, a great many actors and actresses also hired the services of professional hunters when shooting movies in Africa. This list includes the likes of John Wayne, Red Buttons, Hardy Kruger, Stewart Granger, Deborah Kerr, Ava Gardner, Clark Gable, Grace Kelly, Susan Hayward, Gary Cooper, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, David Janssen, Robert Montgomery, Hugh O'Brien, Victor Mature, Gregory Peck (hunter David Lunan was actually Peck's stand-in in *Snows of Kilimanjaro*, and had to shoot the charging rhino in the movie to protect the film crew), Robert Stack, William Holden (who at the end of the safari bought the hotel at which he'd stayed), and Edward G. Robinson. Grace Kelly enjoyed her safari experience so much that she sent hunter Murray Smith a Christmas card and personal note every year afterwards, even after becoming Princess Grace of Monaco. Safari guides can easily make friends in high places.

Naturally, men who place such a high premium on skilled marksmanship can be useful as soldiers as well. Among the Boers of South Africa were many expert hunters and marksmen, which is one of the reasons the British had so much trouble during the Boer Wars. When World War I began, the hunters of British East Africa volunteered *en masse* for action against German East Africa (which became British after the war ended), and signed up again in World War II to fight against the Italians. Even as late as the 1950s, many white hunters of Kenya served as soldiers and undercover agents during the Mau Mau Rebellion. In the American West, buffalo hunters and mountain men served as scouts for the US Cavalry against the Native Americans, and earlier frontiersmen like Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett campaigned against the eastern tribes. Professional hunters were usually better shots than ordinary soldiers and they often carried more powerful firearms as well.

The skills of the professional hunter are not limited to combat and wilderness survival. Human relations (remember all those VIPs he takes care of on safari?) is one of his fortes, as well. When faced with hostile or potentially hostile diplomatic encounters, it helps when your side has a hunter who not only carries a huge gun, but



who is renowned for his skill with it. A good hunter also must negotiate with local natives for supplies.

The nature of his occupation can do much to make the professional hunter popular among the locals. Killing a man-eating lion, tiger, or leopard, or a rogue elephant that's been tearing up crops and villagers can make a hunter an instant hero. Since many native tribesmen are poor and live hand-to-mouth, the hunter can earn good will by supplying them with fresh meat. Imagine the reaction of a group of starving tribesmen who see a hunter gun down a massive bull elephant, hack out the tusks, and then wave at the carcass and say "You can have the rest."

Hunters may provide other services, as well. One ivory hunter taught a local tribe of landlubber natives how to pilot canoes because he had amassed a horde of elephant tusks in the middle of nowhere, and the only way to get them to market was by river. Others doctored sick natives, clashed with ivory poachers (sometimes even the poachers themselves would do this to cut down on the competition), and occasionally found themselves running an entire region as a sort of unpaid (and underappreciated by the authorities) District Officer. On the trails of the wilderness, adventure awaits.

THE BIG GAME HUNTER

A player who chooses the Big Game Hunter occupation should have the following skills: Bargain, Hide, Natural History, Navigate, Rifle or Shotgun (the latter if he specializes in market-hunting birds), Sneak, Spot Hidden, and Track. As the character develops and gains experience among the natives, he should also pick up Anthropology and at least one local language. If he travels alone, or has no aides to help him on a safari, he may also have to take Drive Automobile/Carriage, Pilot Aircraft/Boat, or Ride to get around. This is a sizable list of skills, which is why it is often best if at least two characters in the party are hunters; multiple characters can divvy up a large number of skills between them.

If the character is a member of the original band of investigators, tailoring his or her integration into the investigation group should not be a problem. Coming in later as a replacement for a deceased or insane original character will make things more complicated. If the party finds itself shorthanded on the eve of a wilderness adventure they can hire on a safari guide to nurse them through the jungle. The hunter also can be tromping through the bush on his own when he just happens to stumble across the party in the middle of some dire Mythos peril.

WEAPONS

If you select Big Game Hunter as your investigator occupation, you've just entered a world in which the 30.06 rifle is regarded as a light weapon. Big Game Hunters should choose from the weaponry available in the core *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook and the supplements *Cthulhu Now* and *Fatal Experiments*. The sidebar to the right offers additional suggestions for hunting rifles, which may be chosen at the discretion of the keeper. Hunter investigators who hunt birds (especially waterfowl) should begin play with a shotgun. Everyone else should select one of the many rifles available.

Weapon	Base Chance	Damage	Attacks/Rd
Roer	25	2D6	1-shot
.350 Mauser	25	2D8	1
.404 Mauser	25	1D10+1D6	1
.416 Rahillon	25	1D10+1D4+3	1
.450 No. 2	25	1D10+1D6+3	1/2
.470 Rigby	15	2D10+1D6	1/2
.475 O.K.H.	15	2D10+1D6	1
.500/.465	15	3D8+3/2D10	1/2
.500 H&H	15	3D8+3	1/2
.505 Gibbs	15	2D10+4	1
.577 Bland	15	2D10+1D8	1/2
.58 Springfield	15	1D10+4	1-shot
Continental .600	15	3D10	1 or 2

Weapon	Bullets in Gun	Range	Cost Gun/Ammo	Mal.
Roer	1	100	25/.03	00
.350 Mauser	5	100	600/1.00	98
.404 Mauser	3	120	800/1.10	98
.416 Rahillon	3	100	850/1.20	00
.450 No. 2	2	70	800/1.50	00
.470 Rigby	2	100	700/1.10	00
.475 O.K.H.	3	100	700/1.10	98
.500/.465	2	100	600/1.00/.95	00
.500 H&H	2	100	650/1.00	00
.505 Gibbs	2	100	700/1.10	00
.577 Bland	2	100	750/1.00	00
.58 Springfield	1	60	25/.03	00
Continental .600	2	120	1200/2.75	00

Availability: All the shotguns above were present in Victorian times, as were the two Mausers, the Roer, the Springfield, the .450 double, the H&H .500, the Bland's .577, and the Continental .600. In the 1920s, add the .470 double-barrel, with everything else appearing after the 1920s.

Nationality: Mauser is famed as a German gun manufacturer. Spencer, Sharps, Marlin, Winchester, Springfield, and Weatherby are all American, as is O.K.H.(the initials stand for the three developers: O'Neil, Keith, and Hopkins). The .475 O.K.H. is a magazine version of the older .470 double-barrel. The muzzle-loading Roer was used by the early Boer settlers of South Africa. The Rahillon is a Belgian gun, and everything else is British.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Big Game Hunter, replete with its fantastic natural setting, interactions with primitive natives, and powerful animal adversaries, is well-suited for a life of adventure and weird discovery. The following hooks, pattered after the different roles a hunter might play, will help enterprising keepers to keep parties on their toes and watching their backs.

GUIDING THE SAFARI

Next to ivory hunting, the greatest spoils for the Big Game Hunter probably come from guiding the rich on safaris. The word "safari" comes from the Arabic *safara*, which means "to travel." In India, the hunt is called the *shikar*, with the hunter called a *shikaree*. The hunter guides people ranging from other seasoned hunters to complete incompetents into the wilderness on either a regular hunt or, more common as the years go by, a photographic safari. The latter should be more nerve-wracking by far for your character; you're the only one in the party carrying a gun, so it's all up to you when things turn ugly. Gun-bearing clients can fight back, too, and even if they miss, they distract

the hunting horrors long enough for you to get in some killing shots.

Of course, a hunting safari has its own problems. If your client wounds an animal without killing it, someone has to go after the beast to finish it off. A wounded animal, especially a large one, can do just as much damage as the lesser monsters of the Cthulhu Mythos, and animals are far more common. The aforementioned crack marksman Eric Rundgren was almost killed by a leopard on his first safari after he quit the Game Department to become hunting guide, after not one, but two clients completely missed easy shots on the beast. As Rundgren said, "hunting for yourself with only your own hide and that of your bearers to watch out for is one thing, but hunting with nincompoops is another kettle of fish." What would he have said if the "nincompoops" he was guiding refused to fire on a charging rhino because their guns were loaded with silver or enchanted shot, and they didn't want to shoot until they came across a "real" threat?

EXPLORING

In this hook, better suited for earlier periods, the hunter takes an expedition into unknown territory. Needless to say, this is the kind of adventure in which one is likely to stumble upon a colony of Mythos creatures. Furthermore, because the territory being explored is completely unknown, if the party doesn't return on schedule, a relief expedition won't be sent out for a very long time, if ever.

Of course, with the presence of time and/or dimensional portals in *Call of Cthulhu*, "uncharted territory" can take on a whole new meaning. For example, the *Dreamlands* sourcebook mentions that the Plateau of Leng is famous for its massive planks of ivory. Create a Mythos beast with giant teeth or tusks, and give your group's ivory hunters the opportunity to go after the "tusker" of a lifetime. Even among ordinary hunters it was considered an impressive feat to bring down a "hundred-pounder," an elephant so large that each of its tusks weighed at least a hundred pounds. Throw in the opportunity for wealth and fame, and watch your players jump at the investigation. Of course, dimensional portals can provide a gate from which intelligent Mythos monsters with fell plans might venture to earth, and hunting these foul outsiders might just save civilization from a new brand of savage.

COMMERCIAL HUNTING

Commercial hunters kill animals for fun and profit, with a special emphasis on the latter. Whether the hunter hunts to furnish merchants with trophies to be sold to armchair sportsmen, buffalo hides for the folk back east, ivory for the world's upper crust, or to put rare birds on the plates of hungry dandies, many hunters are in it for the money. Incidentally, the giant shotguns presented in *Fatal Experiments* and elsewhere are more economical in the long run; successful market hunters who killed waterfowl and game birds with conventional shotguns often had to buy a new gun every season, because the barrels eventually choked with lead. Just keep in mind that if any fool tries to conceal a sawed-off shotgun of 8-, 4-, or 2-gauge, he deserves all the legal and other penalties you can throw at him.

Ivory hunting is the most lucrative form of professional hunting, so much so that it was often mingled with other classes of safari, such as exploration or trophy shooting. Fitting out a safari is an expensive process, but a few decent elephant tusks can pay for the entire expedition, and then some. Certainly investigators who are chronically starved for funds (i.e. every party without at least one Dilettante among them) will be tempted to do a bit of ivory hunting (or poaching!) on the side to pay for expensive pieces of gear, such as those costly silver coatings for their bullets.

POACHING

This sounds like an unlikely occupation for a group of heroes, but the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebooks from the birth of the game have set the precedent by offering character occupations such as Anarchist (or Revolutionary in the latest edition) and Gangster. At least it's a pleasant change to have criminal characters who kill animals for a living instead of other people.

The majority of poachers were just in it for the money, of course, but there were exceptions. Some did it for the added thrill, not only of the hunt, but also of evading the authorities. Others actually looked on poaching as a way of gaining valuable skills needed for more legitimate work. The classic example of this was the Greek hunter C.J.P. Ionides, known to his colleagues as "Iodine."
In the second half of the 1920s, prime *Call of Cthulhu* territory, he poached ivory in East Africa, both to earn money and to gain the skills needed for his dream job of Game Department ranger. After all, he knew all the bad guys' tricks. He started out as an assistant game ranger in 1933, and by 1936 was put in charge of the 20,000-square mile Selous Game Reserve (named after a great white hunter from an earlier generation). From then until 1965, when he was replaced by Brian Nicholson (another former hunter turned park ranger), he tracked down poachers and rogue animals, provided competent administration, and even expanded the park's boundaries, until the Selous was the largest self-sustaining hunting preserve in Africa, a feat for which Ionides was dubbed "the father of the Selous." Sometimes, poachers really do make the best gamekeepers!

GAME CONTROL

When wild beasts are chowing down on the locals, their livestock, or their crops, who you gonna call? In many horror stories, when a monster of some sort goes on the rampage, the first casualties are thought to be the victims of an ordinary animal such as a lion or a wolf. This means that the "*bwana* Game" (*bwana* means "mas-

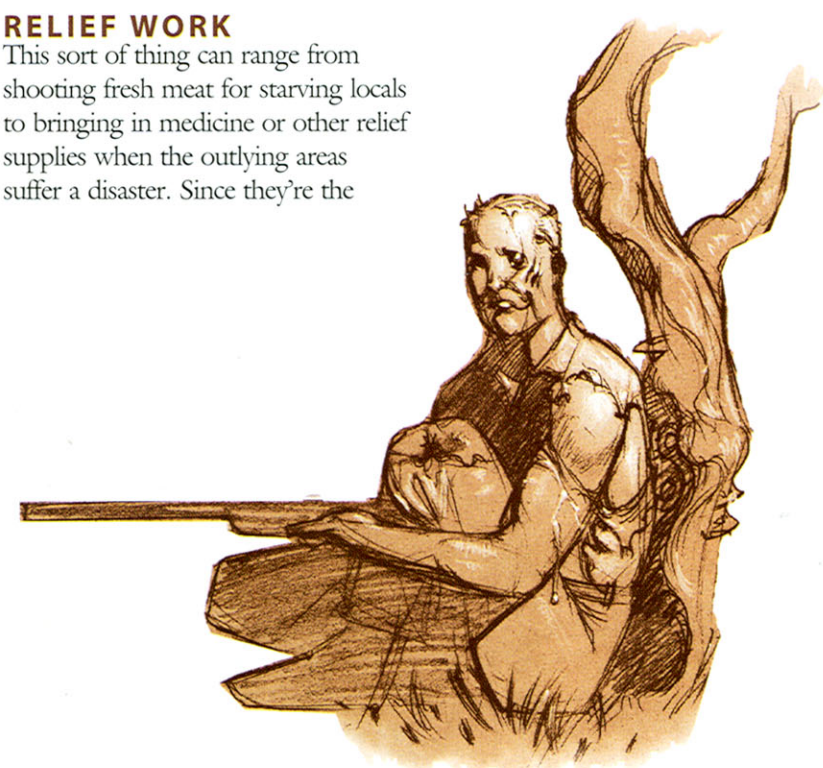
ter" in Swahili) is often the first authority-figure to make the acquaintance of the horror. He may be able to kill it himself, if it's one of those beasts that can be slain by ordinary weapons (Mythos races such as the deep ones and the mi-go come to mind). If not, then he'll have to wire for help, which can bring in more exotic characters. This is, incidentally, another good way for the investigators to link up with new hunter characters.

In many cases, the rampaging beast will be just that: a rampaging beast. The keeper should supply the new investigator or party with a quick succession of such threats at the very start of the campaign. This serves both to throw them off guard when the first real monster comes along, and to enable them to build up experience, skills, and a repertoire of lethal or life-saving tricks. After all, if your investigators can't handle a leopard, a man-eating lion, or a wolf pack, how can they ever be expected to tackle a hunting horror or shantak? And since "*bwana* Game" has to take on human poachers as well as beasts, this can be good practice for dealing with an intelligent alien race.

RELIEF WORK

This sort of thing can range from shooting fresh meat for starving locals to bringing in medicine or other relief supplies when the outlying areas suffer a disaster. Since they're the only people who routinely work on the fringes of civilization, park rangers and similar people are sent in when disaster strikes. If the disaster was brought about by the horrors of the Mythos, the mission will go from healing to hurting (the opposition, one hopes) in a very short time.

The ancient and honorable profession of big game hunter has been sadly neglected in modern-era RPGs, but this article should provide at least a partial remedy. Face down those horrors of the Mythos with a stiff upper lip and unblinking marksman's eye, right before you give them both barrels. If you can't kill the horrors yourself, your skills will still be needed to keep those who can kill them alive until they get their chance. If you're lucky enough to bring down a critter that doesn't dissolve upon death, think of the opportunities you'll have to engage in games of one-upmanship with fellow hunters: "My trophies are so special, you'll go insane when you see them!"



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YOUR PLAYERS ARE SMART. THEY'VE DONE THIS BEFORE. TO GET IT RIGHT, YOU'VE GOT TO UNDERSTAND THE...

Ecology of a Dungeon

BY MATTHEW HANCOCK

ILLUSTRATIONS BY VINCE LOCKE

Korde the Mighty looked around the corner, only to spot another dead end.

"Wasn't this place built by dwarven engineers?" He asked the wizard, Corin. "Why are there so many corridors that go nowhere?"

"I don't know," Corin responded, pulling out his abacus. "By my estimation, this last corridor alone represents at least 500 dwarven work hours and roughly 5,000 gold in expenditure. These dead ends make no sense."

The warrior nodded. " At least we know why the dwarves were chased out of this place; they were too tired from all this useless digging to fight!"

Anyone who has played D&D for any length of time has delved into a dungeon. Whether it was a prison, an orc lair, or just a wizard's basement, all of us have had the pleasure of traipsing into the dark depths. Often, an entire adventure will revolve around what lies at the bottom of one of these complexes. Therefore, it's important to make certain that dungeons make sense and that they challenge both the player and the character she plays. Like any type of habitat, a dungeon is host to ecology. Designing comprehensive ecology can be thirsty work, and attempting to design every motivation of its construction can frazzle the most creative and dedicated world-builder. So, to help, here are a few things to remember when you're thinking up your next dungeon.

LAYOUT

When designing your dungeon, it's important that everything in it makes sense within the context of why the complex was built. Nothing frustrates players more than a puzzle they, through no fault of their own, can't solve. Even if a "mad mage" built the dungeon, there will be some method to his madness, but the reasons may be so obscure, obsessive, or paranoid that they will puzzle your players during a good chunk of the adventure. A dead end makes sense if there is a small, foul-smelling hole in the floor, with a stained stool nearby. Unfortunately, it will also make sense if it sports a green devil face with a gaping pitch-black mouth (*a la Tomb of Horrors*), but by the time your player's find out what that sense is, it may be too late for their characters. To help create functional and rational layouts, ask the following questions:

WHY WAS IT BUILT?

When creating a dungeon, remember this phrase: form equals function. A dungeon's layout will reflect the reason for its creation. It takes many grueling hours and costs a treasure trove of gold to dig through rock and earth. A good architect will limit digging where he can. Keep your dungeon complexes simple—mines follow the ore, tombs protect and glorify those buried in them, and prisons keep people in and out.

On the other hand, if you're designing a residence for a subterranean race you must decide why the occupants built it in the location they did. The most important deciding point for subterranean locations is proximity to both food and drinking water. Without these two elements, no colony has any hope of survival without a substantial amount of "foreign aid." Even if the race plans to rely on raiding for food, they still must have adequate fresh water nearby, as well as some food they can scavenge when raiding pickings are slim.

There are dungeons where food and water are not considerations for the location. Many times these dungeons are home to someone (or some thing) that does not want to be found. In such cases, an inaccessible, remote site is the best place to hide. The creatures in these dungeons either do not need food (undead), or have food stockpiled for them (see "Who Lives There?" below). These dungeons will be deliberately filled with dead ends and other inconsistencies to either confuse intruders or lead them into deadly traps.

WHO BUILT IT?

The next step is to decide who built the dungeon. Different races do things in different ways. A beholder hive will have a very different feel and function than a dwarven colony, and both will differ when compared to a transmuter's monster menagerie. Lawful creatures likely will have very organized dungeons, while chaotic creatures will take a somewhat more haphazard approach. Your players will better understand idiosyncrasies within a goblin warren than within a mind-flayer commune.

The next thing to take into account is the size of the builders. For example, kobold dens will have

chambers that are four-, maybe five-feet high with lower passageway ceilings. Larger passages are dug to move prisoners and other large items. You can also bet that these large corridors would be filled with traps and hidden smaller passages perfect for ambushes.

Knowing who built the dungeon is also the best way to add flavor text and dungeon dressings. For example, if the dungeon was built by dwarves, describe the artistic scrollwork in the archways or the exactness of the room measurements. If the dungeon was built by an elderly mage, place a rest area in the middle of any long hallway; perhaps a padded bench with some choice books and scrolls cluttering a small reading table.

WHO LIVES THERE NOW?

When deciding upon what creatures live in your dungeon, there are some important factors to take into account.

Your PCs will quickly become bored if your dungeon designs are thinly veiled excuses to fight some of your favorite monsters stuck in a random collection of rooms. Smart players will eventually wonder what these hostile predators are feeding on when they aren't waiting for adventurers to kill. Asking who lives in the dungeon and why can provide some excellent ideas for subterranean role-playing opportunities, and your PCs may appreciate the opportunity to interact with denizens of the dungeon.

For example, if, in your dungeon, there's an orc tribe living near a troll, ask the question: what arrangement do the orcs have with the troll? Most likely the orcs will be paying a tribute to appease the troll bully. During the crawl, give PCs the chance to discover the arrangement between the troll and the orcs. Perhaps the PCs chance upon the orcs as they pay their tribute to the brute. Maybe the tribute is a younger member of the orc tribe. The orcs may be very willing to give PCs information about other areas of the dungeon in exchange for one dead troll. Or, instead, the PCs can convince the troll that the orcs have decided not to pay their next tribute, thus enraging the troll into an all-out assault on his neighbors. Determining just how dungeon denizens interact with one another will present more roleplaying possibilities for the PCs than the normal search and destroy adventuring routine.

Sometimes creatures live in dungeons for reasons other than their own choice. Slaves and undead are common dungeon residents. Though they are not as common, creatures under the affect of a *geas* spell can also be found down under.

Undead can be very problematic for other dungeon residents due to their hatred for life. There is no worse neighbor than an intelligent undead on a power trip; they tend to claim as much area as they are able, and always more than they need.

Guardian beasts, and some *geased* creatures, literally sit around and wait for a fight. While their living area will be confined to smaller areas than social monsters and territorial undead, these creatures will know that area very well and will use that knowledge against any would-be thieves. Always keep in mind that many times the creatures who live in a dungeon are not the ones who built it. Orcs are infamous squatters, and often will convert ancient dwarven ruins into their own foul pits. After all, why build when you can steal? Over time, the new tenants will add their own special flair to a dungeon, digging here and there for this and that. As well, they may dig through to neighboring complexes, creating even larger and more dynamic dungeons.

THE SUPERDUNGEON

So-called superdungeons are massive multi-layer death traps containing every type of dungeon that has been suggested so far and more. Undermountain, in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® Setting, and Castle Greyhawk are two examples of this type of dungeon. These complexes usually have long, convoluted histories involving various races building or converting entire levels.

Sometimes these mega-dungeons are the playthings of malicious entities out only to entertain their twisted humor. In either case, the architecture and inhabitants of these places can change at every turn. These dungeons differ from other dungeons in that they are not something the PCs "clear out." Superdungeons are often too vast for even an experienced group of delvers to ever dream of emptying. These dungeons feature large expanses that are prime living space for monsters. Even if adventures clear out a section, a new group will reclaim the space before you can say "die orc, die." At the same time, any number of minor or major adventures can take place in one of these dungeons, making them an excellent resource for any campaign. The superdungeon also presents the most challenge for the ecology conscious DM. Juggling all the sections in a way that will make sense, that stays dynamic and provides fun is a brain teaser, but one that holds great gaming rewards.

WHERE IS THE DUNGEON?

The location of the dungeon ties many of the other questions together. While a dungeon has its own inner ecology, it's also tied to the ecology of the world in which it is located. The physical locale of your dungeon can help you flesh out the who and why of the dungeon further.

Say that you have decided to create an abandoned temple and tomb to an ancient evil to challenge your game group. You decide to place the dungeon in a locale about two day's ride from the port city they currently call home. Looking at your campaign map, you notice that you pencilled in some cliffs up the coast, similar to the cliff of Dover you saw in a travel brochure, and the wheels start to spin.

Centuries ago, an ancient cult venerated the sahuagin who

dwelled in the seas nearby, driven by both fear and awe. The priests of the cult began to emulate these fierce hunters so much that they became cannibals, taking to heart the mantra "meat is meat." To house their growing cult, they tunneled into the sandstone cliffside near their sacred shoreline, and dug deeper and deeper as the years went by. Eventually, they dug a little too deep and opened a passage into a koa-toa-dominated region of the Underdark. In the end, another group of scaly folk slaughtered the fishmen-worshiping priests. Sailors and fisherman know of the caves, but stay away because of legends about the old cult. They say the ancient high priest still dwells in the ruins, feeding still off the flesh of men. The place is also a launching point for raids by the koa-toa, as well as those from their drow allies.

The winding chambers and living quarters of the upper sea caves may make an excellent hiding spot for verminish monsters (goblins and kobolds) or minor undead remnants of the priesthood. Larger undertemples can be converted into either koa-toa temples or the large recreation and breeding pools those creatures enjoy. The deeper you go, the more you will run into other groups from the Underdark, and the rumors about the ancient high priest just may turn out to be true!

Try choosing exotic locations to help solidify your dungeon's ecology. Yet another sprawl of passages under that mad wizard's crumbling tower can frustrate your start, while a dungeon with an opening next to a hot spring at the base of a snowy peak may give you fresh ideas about how to develop the rest of the dungeon.

GETTING PCS TO THE DUNGEON

Once the dungeon is designed, one final problem remains. What will motivate your party into its depths? How do they know about it? Each of the above sections can contain a built-in reason for the PCs to visit the dungeon:

WHY WAS IT BUILT?

The dungeon was built to safeguard an artifact. The PCs need that artifact to contain a magical plague that is spreading throughout the kingdom.

WHO BUILT IT?

The dungeon is an ancient dwarven stronghold. One (or more) of the PCs are dwarves whose ancestors founded that ancient dwarf-home. They learn of that a legendary heirloom that was once thought lost was actually left in their ancestral halls.

WHO LIVES THERE?

The dungeon is the lair of a powerful lich. The PCs discover that the lich has been the source of all their recent troubles and decide to put an end to him, once and for all.

WHERE IS THE DUNGEON?

Proximity to where the party currently dwells can be a motivation in its own, especially for lower-level adventures. Monstrous threats at the doorstep of a character's home, or the promise of treasure and fame can be strong lures.

CONCLUSION

Remember that creating dungeons is an art, not a science. If you follow these or any other guidelines constantly, your PCs will begin to anticipate your design. Know when to change things around. Shake up the system. The goal of good dungeon ecology is to create plausible environments that will challenge your players and their characters.

For example, leave hints that a particular dungeon is the home of a group of hobgoblins. When they arrive at the dungeon, the PCs find all the trappings of these nasties—the (un)holy symbols of their deities, the use of hobgoblin way-markers, weapons, armors, and daily implements of obvious hobgoblin make. Imagine their shock upon discovering that the caves have been altered into the tomb of an undead hobgoblin lord who transformed the entire tribe into his zombie servants. Their master has programmed his minions to follow typical hobgoblin routines, and has cast some healthy doses of a special spell that slows the rotting process of his zombies, which both decreases their stench and limits the amount of rotting flesh a tracking PC may discover in the upper caverns. Your group, ready to combat the expected foe, will have to think fast when they realize their bows and slashing weapons will have a limited effect against the real threat of the adventure.

As long as you can answer the basic questions of who, why, and where, and follow up those questions in a sensible and fun way, your dungeon adventures will never want.

ARACHNIA AUSTRALIS

MUTATED SPIDERS IN GAMMA AUSTRALIA— NEW CREATURES FOR ALTERNITY®: GAMMA WORLD®

BY GEOFF SKELLAMS ILLUSTRATIONS BY TED BEARGEON

Prior to the Cataclysm, Australia was home to some of the world's most deadly spiders. Since the coming of the Invaders and the unleashing of their biological arsenal, the creatures that once struck fear into the hearts of so many have become monsters of pure terror.

ARTRAKS

By far the most dangerous of any of the mutant spiders, the artraks have been described by some as the spawn of Satan given flesh. Descended from the originally deadly funnel web spiders, artraks are usually given a wide berth by most sane people.

Description: Standing two meters tall, and with a leg span that can stretch as long as five meters, the artraks is a formidable looking creature. Their bodies are usually a glossy black or dark brown, and their eight legs have sharp, bristly hairs growing from them. Eight black dead looking eyes are perched on tops of their heads, giving them close to 360° vision.

But it is their fangs that most fear. Close to three-quarters of a meter long, artraks' fangs look like jet-black scimitars. Quite often venom literally drips from them, especially when the excited Artraks has cornered its prey. The artraks can also rear up on its hind legs and "spit" venom at a target, giving it a formidable ranged attack. The venom is one of the most lethal known. An individual bitten by an artraks will probably be dead within ten minutes, as the neurotoxin sends the nervous system into complete overdrive. If the victim is only sprayed, the venom is slower to affect the nervous system. If the venom is not washed off immediately the victim will usually die within thirty minutes of the spraying.

Encounter: Fortunately for most people the artraks is a territorial rather than a roving killer. Their territory extends up to a kilometer in diameter, with tripwire webs spun throughout that area. The webs are sticky enough to make movement very difficult for a human sized creature and they transmit such movement very well, so that any creature snagging itself in an artraks web will find itself facing a hungry artraks within a matter of minutes.

In the late summer and autumn months, the male artraks leaves its lair to search for a mate. While these spiders do not eat during their mate hunt they will attack creatures; they are even more aggressive than usual, and will at times attack for no apparent reason.

Habitat/Society: Artraks prefer to construct their lairs in woodlands, where they can dig their burrows and snare passing game. At the center of their territory they spin a large funnel-shaped web leading down into their main burrow. Throughout the territory tripwires are strung about thirty centimeters above the ground. These thin sticky threads are difficult to see in daylight; by night they are virtually invisible. Artraks also have been known to make their lairs in ancient ruins, trapping anyone unwise enough to enter in search of treasure.

GAME DATA

STR	14	(d8+8)
DEX	10	(d6+6)
CON	10	(d6+6)
INT	3	(Animal 13 or d8+8)
WIL	12	(d6+8)
PER	1	(Animal 3 or d4+1)

Durability: 10/10/5/5
Action Check: 14+/13/6/3
Move: sprint 24, run 16, walk 6
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary/2
Mutations: Poison Attack (neurotoxin), Increased Precision

Attacks

Bite, 12/6/3, d6+1w/d6+3w/d6+1m, LI/O
Poison (Injected) d6+1m/d8+1m/d12+1m, LI/O
Poison (Sprayed), 10/5/2 d4-1m/d4+1m/d6+1m, LI/O

Defenses

+4 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks

Skills

Athletics [12] - *climb [16]*; Stealth [8] - *hide [12], sneak [12]*; Stamina [11]; Awareness [12]; Resolve [12] - *mental [14].*

YAAGER

Easily the most mobile of any of the mutated spiders, the yaager, descended from the huntsman spider, is perhaps the fastest thing on eight legs.

Description: Standing a little over a meter tall, with a leg span of around two meters, the Yaager is a still a formidable sight. Their fine fur-covered bodies are almost always a light brown color, although some dark brown specimens have been reported. Yaagers have eight brown eyes on the front

of their heads. Their fangs are usually around twenty centimeters long.

Encounter: A Yaager will almost always be encountered while out on one of its never-ending hunting trips. They are usually found in woodlands or amongst ruins where they can be assured of finding plentiful food. When the Yaager detects a victim it will creep up on it like a pre-Cataclysm cheetah and then use its speed to run-down its prey. Yaagers are incredibly agile and can outrun all but the fastest of creatures. Fortunately for its victims, these bursts of speed only last a few minutes before the spider tires. An exhausted yaager must rest for nearly an hour before it is able to give chase again.

Habitat/Society: Yaagers are solitary hunters. They usually live inside large hollow logs, old concrete pipes, or inside ancient ruins. Unlike most spiders, the Yaager does not spin any sort of web, preferring to use its raw speed and agility to bring down its prey.

GAME DATA

STR	10	(d6+6)
DEX	20	(2d6+12)
CON	10	(d6+6)
INT	2	(Animal 11 or d6+7)
WIL	12	(d6+8)
PER	1	(Animal 5 or d6+1)

Durability: 10/10/5/5
Action Check: 17+/16/8/4
Move: sprint 30, run 20, walk 8
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary/2
Mutations: Poison Attack (neurotoxin), Increased Speed

Attacks
Bite, 12/6/3
d4+1w/d4+3w/d4+1m, LI/O

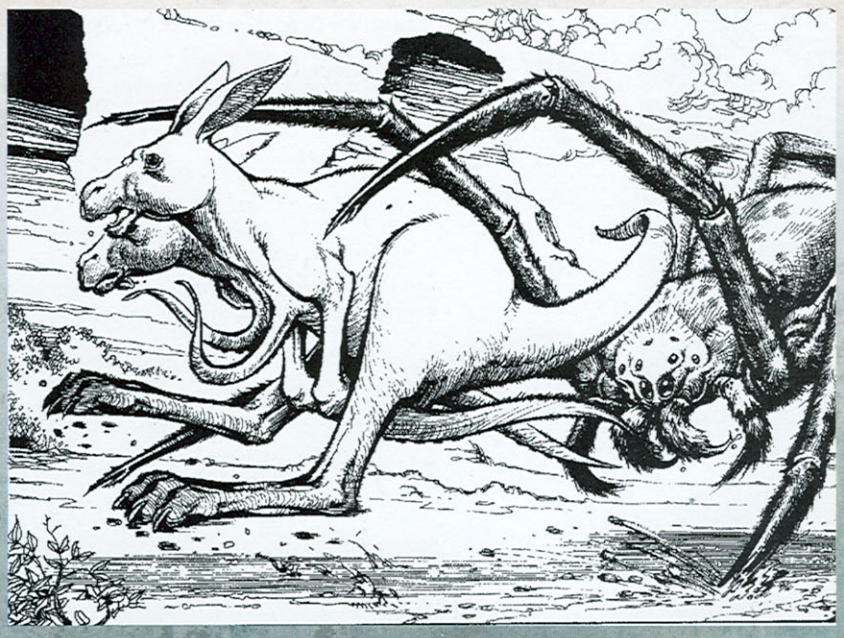
Defenses
+1 resistance modifier vs. meleee attacks

Skills
Athletics [12] - *climb [16], jump [16]*; Stealth [8] - *hide [10], sneak [14]*; Movement [11] - *race [16]*; Awareness [12]; Resolve [12] - *mental [14].*

SHWARSFROU

The terror of all treasure hunters, the shwarsfrou lurks in the ruins of the Ancients waiting to lure its victims with illusions of riches.

Description: The Shwarsfrou is a small spider with a body approximately 90 cm in length and leg span of around a meter and a half. The head of a shwarsfrou is disproportionately smaller than the distended abdomen, which can sometimes be nearly half a meter in diameter. All shwarsfrous are a glossy black color and have a blood-red marking on their abdomens. Like human fingerprints, no two shwarsfrous have a marking exactly the same.



Encounter: Shwarsfrous are nocturnal creatures, avoiding sunlight whenever possible. Generally, they are found deep within Ancient ruins, almost always in the underground sections of such ruins. They are perhaps the most cunning of all the mutant spiders, relying on stealth and illusion to hunt instead of brute strength and speed.

Shwarsfrous tend to weave their nests in secluded crevices deep within the ruins. They string an intricate web of very fine filaments across all of the approaches to their trap, and then spin a large net of extremely sticky filaments woven in a dark corner. When a victim breaks one of the Swarsfrou's tripwires the shwarsfrou empathetically scans the target to attempt to learn what he is searching for. If the scan is successful the Shwarsfrou then uses its illusion generation ability to create an illusion of the victim's desire which it projects just beneath the sticky net. If the victim takes the bait the Shwarsfrou releases the net, immobilizing the victim and allowing the Shwarsfrou to come down at its leisure to feed.

Habitat/Society: Shwarsfrous are only found in the depths of the Ancients' ruins, far from the sun. They will spin their nests inside deep cracks or other inaccessible places—preferably air-conditioning ducts. They do not need to feed very often, perhaps only once every week or two. For the most part, the shwarsfrou will do everything it can to avoid a conflict it does not control—they do not have the speed or power of other spider species.

GAME DATA

STR	10	(d6+6)
DEX	10	(d6+6)
CON	10	(d6+6)
INT	12	(Animal 21 or 2d6+12)
WIL	12	(d6+8)
PER	1	(Animal 5 or d6+1)

Durability: 10/10/5/5
Action Check: 11+/10/4/2
Move: sprint 20, run 12, walk 4
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary/2
Mutations: Poison Attack, (neurotoxin), Empathic Scan, Illusion Generation.

Attacks
Bite, 10/5/2, d4w/d4+1w/d4+1m, LI/O

Defenses
-1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
+1 WIL resistance modifier against encounter skills

Skills
Athletics [12] - *climb [14]*; Stealth [12] - *hide [16], sneak [14]*; Awareness [12] - *perception [15]*; Deception [10] - *bluff [12];* Resolve [12] - *mental [14].*

LAMPOR

The Lampor is the only arachnid to have an exclusive taste for human or mutant flesh—all of the other mutant spiders will eat anything they can catch.

Description: The Lampor have cylindrical bodies about a meter and a half long and a leg span of about two and a half meters across. Lampors are a dull dark gray or brown in color, with a large white spot at its abdomen's end. Lampors have four large black eyes on the front of their heads. Their fangs are long, thin and dagger-shaped, usually around forty centimeters long.

Encounter: Lampors are nocturnal creatures, going on the hunt as soon as night falls. They relish the taste of adrenaline-charged flesh, so they do whatever they can to work up their sentient prey into a frenzy.

One of a lampor's favorite tricks is to creep as close as it can to the victim, using its invisibility power. It then whispers to the victim, telling him or her exactly what their future holds. Quite often, the lampor will reach out with one of its front legs and gently stroke the side of the victim's face, before suggesting it may be wise to make a run for it. Once the victim is in flight, the lampor pounces on it, playing with it in the same way that an Ancient age cat played with a mouse.

Lampor venom is one of the nastiest know in the Gamma age. The Lampor will draw its fangs across the victim's skin, leaving shallow bleeding cuts. The venom is injected at the same time, and within minutes the victim's skin begins to fester. If the victim is not treated immediately the venom will eat away at the victim's flesh until they die an agonizing death two days later.

Habitat/Society: Lampors are fairly reclusive creatures, doing whatever they can to avoid detection. Their favorite lairs are close to transient camping sites, where they can pick off unsuspecting travelers at night. By day they curl up in abandoned cars or pipes, avoiding the heat and glare of the sun. As soon as dark falls they emerge and go in search of prey.

GAME DATA

STR	14	(d8+8)
DEX	13	(d8+7)
CON	11	(d6+7)
INT	6	(Animal 15 or 2d6+8)
WIL	12	(d6+8)
PER	1	(Animal 5 or d6+1)

Durability: 10/10/5/5
Action Check: 11+/10/4/2
Move: sprint 26, run 16, walk 6
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary/2
Mutations: Poison Attack (necrotoxin), Improved Invisibility, Translation

Attacks
Bite, 13/6/3, d4+2w/d6w/d6m, LI/O

Defenses
+1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
+2 WIL resistance modifier against encounter skills

Skills
Athletics [10] - *climb [12]*; Stealth [14] - *hide [15], sneak [17]*; Awareness [12] - *intuition [14], perception [15]*; Resolve [12] - *mental [14];* Interaction [12] - charm *[13], seduce [13], taunt [15].*

LUPINUS

The smallest of all the mutated spiders, the lupinus makes up for its

diminutive stature by hunting in packs.

Description: A lupinus stands only around half a meter in height, with a total leg span of around a meter and a half in a fully-grown specimen. Its body is covered with a light fur that ranges in color anywhere from tan to dark brown. All individuals have a pair of dark stripes running the length of their abdomen. A lupinus' fangs are only around fifteen centimeters in length and are distinctively curved. The female lupinus is usually slightly larger than the male, and tends to be darker in color.

Encounter: Lupinus spiders are encountered only in open grasslands or light woods. The pack hunts together using flanking maneuvers to herd their prey into an ambush. While each spider is quite small, the pack's teamwork allows them bring down prey much larger than themselves. It is not unknown for a lupinus pack to be able to bring down an artraks.

Habitat/Society: The lupinus is perhaps the only breed of mutant spider that lives in a pack structure. Groups of six to eight spiders live together at all times, headed by a dominant female. The rest of the group is made up of one or two juvenile females and a harem of males.

Lupinus packs do not settle in one area. Instead, they live a fairly nomadic existence, roving over a large territory. Each day the pack will travel up to twenty kilometers, hunting every two to three days. When the pack makes a kill they all feed until only the victim's skeleton remains. They then rest for up to thirty-six hours before moving on.

GAME DATA

STR	11	(d6+7)
DEX	11	(d6+7)
CON	12	(d6+8)
INT	6	(Animal 15 or 2d6+8)
WIL	10	(d4+8)
PER	2	(Animal 6 or d6+2)

Durability: 10/10/5/5
Action Check: 14+/13/6/3
Move: sprint 22, run 14, walk 4
Actions 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary/2
Mutations: Poison Attack (neurotoxin), Improved Battle Sense.

Attacks
Bite, 14/7/3, d4+2w/d6+1w/d6+1m, LI/O

Defenses
+1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks

Skills
Athletics [10] - *climb [12]*; Stealth [10] - *sneak [13]*; Awareness [10] - *intuition [12], perception [12]*; Investigate [9] - *track [12].*

PRETEXIS

Perhaps the only spider species to have formed a bond with the sentient species, the pretexis does its best to keep settlements free from the predations of other arachnids.

Description: The pretexis is a particularly ungainly looking spider. Its golden brown body is nearly a meter long, but only about twenty centimeters in diameter. Its legs are incredibly long and spindly, sometimes spanning as much as four meters across. The pretexis are, however, remarkably strong, able to carry up to fifty kilograms of weight. They have eight large yellow eyes and their fangs are around twenty centimeters long and can retract into the spider's head when they are not needed. The pretexis makes shrill whistling barks when alarmed, earning it the name of the "siren spider."

Encounter: Sentient species, especially mutants, tend to keep several trained pretexii around their settlements. The giant spiders are quite territorial and will not permit the intrusion of other spiders into the area. They are, however, very easy to train and respond well to firm instruction, particularly when young.

They are extremely loyal to their masters and will do everything within their power to stop an intruder. Their venom is not lethal to humans or mutants, but is almost instantly fatal to other spiders. They are also fond of eating small rodents, particularly rats, which is another reason they are popular in some settlements.

Habitat/Society: The Pretexis is a social animal. It likes to be around people as much as possible. They prefer warm dry places to rest away from bright sunlight. They are equally active both day and night, making them ideal as guard animals. Like the cats of the Ancient age, they prefer to roam and hunt freely, being able to follow a scent wherever it leads.

GAME DATA

STR	12	(d6+8)
DEX	14	(2d4+8)
CON	12	(d6+8)
INT	6	(Animal 15 or 2d6+8)
WIL	10	(d4+8)
PER	4	(Animal 8 or d6+2)

Durability: 10/10/5/5
Action Check: 15+/14/7/3
Move: sprint 26, run 16, walk 6
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary/2
Mutations: Poison Attack (neurotoxin), Danger Sense. Skeletal Enhancement.

Attacks
Bite, 13/6/3, d4w/d4, +2w/d6m, LI/O

Defenses
+1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks

Skills
Athletics [10] - *climb [12], jump [12]*; Stealth [12] - *sneak [15]*; Awareness [12] - *perception [14]*; Investigate [12] - *search [15]*: Resolve [10] - mental *[12].*

The Palace of Passion

RAVENS BLUFF'S TEMPLE OF SUNE

BY KEITH HOFFMAN ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL KALUTA
MAPS BY DENNIS KAUTH

Welcome to the grand opening—make that the stupendous opening—of the new temple of Sune in Ravens Bluff. The Ravens Bluff's beloved have spared no expense creating this work of art and beauty. Come worship The Lady of Love with us and experience romance of the highest order. Celebrate beauty in all its forms. Become passionate about life! Cosmetics are available at the entrance for those unfortunates with facial blemishes…

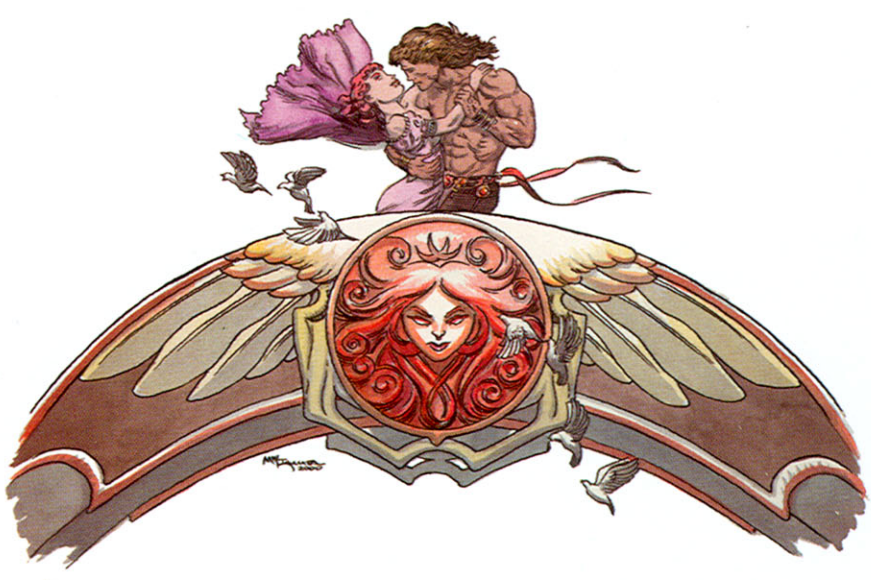
Sune Firehair, Goddess of Beauty, Love and Passion, is worshipped in Ravens Bluff at the Palace of Passion, newly rebuilt following its destruction last year during a struggle between the avatar of Sune and the Baatezu noble Princess Glasya. Since the goddess' heroic stand against that she-devil, the number of worshippers of Sune in Ravens Bluff is on the rise. Sune is very popular among the nobles, wealthy merchants, and social climbers, as well as some artists and those persons seeking lifemates.

The Sunite clergy of Ravens Bluff have good relations with the priests and priestess of Lliira, Selûne, Sheela Peryroyl, and Hanali Celanil, although a friendly rivalry exists with the latter in beauty contests. Their normally good relations with clergy of Sharess were strained by the events of the last year, when it was discovered that one Ravanian temple of Sharess was a cover for worship of Glasya. However, High Priestess Morlain assured her congregation that Sune and Sharess maintain their friendship. Relations with the local temple of Lathander have been strained because of the belief by many Sunites that high priest Relarn Dayspring does not support the admission of Sune into the civic religion of Ravens Bluff.

Those who support the entrance of Sune into the civic religion are quick to point out that her priests sponsor several activities for the citizens of Ravens Bluff. The Body Beautiful program tutors citizens in the correct and fashionable use of cosmetics as well sponsors instruction in subjects such as hair styling, diet and toning exercises, all of which support the firm Sunite belief that a healthful body will be a beautiful body. Aided by the clergies of Lliira, Sheela Peryroyl and Hanali Celanil's Ravanian temples, The Palace of Passion held its first Annual Beautification Day on the 10th of Mirtul, last year. While it was not the success it was planned to be, the rumor is that this year's celebration will be even more ambitious. Traditional Sunite classes in clothing and jewelry fashion continue, and are very popular among the younger nobility. The temple program to help the homeless has been hampered by the lack of a temple last year, but it has now resumed.

Other traditional festivals and holy days have continued, unaffected by the temple rebuilding. These include:

Greengrass – a large outdoor frolic that blends into the citywide festivals.
Midsummer Night – flirtatious chases for young and young-at-heart couples, with kisses as prizes.
Grand Revel – a monthly dusk-to-dawn formal party with dancing, minstrels singing ballads of romance, drama, and adventure, ending with a formal dinner.
Feast of Love – weekly intimate soirées, where partners nibble on "bitelets" and sweet pastries, sip wine, and grow closer in love with their partner or lifemate.



The Palace of Passion is located along Griffon Trail, next to DeVillars Creek, in the Uptown District, Mortonbrace Neighborhood (UM10 in the *City of Ravens Bluff* FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign expansion). The palace consists of three buildings, the main temple set back away from the road, an infirmary (and contemplation center), and living quarters for the clergy.

Gold gilding decorates the temple's marble floors, staircases, and pillars. The pink marble walls support crimson crystal domed ceilings. Delicate crystal chandeliers with softly glowing lights illuminate the halls and common areas. Priceless paintings, exquisite statuary, and silver sculptures abound within the temple. Numerous flower arrangements bring an aura of warmth to every room.

The main temple foyer features displays of artwork and statuary, three immense crystal chandeliers, a grand staircase to the ballroom, ten marble columns, and two staircases that lead down to the dining room. The ballroom features a cathedral ceiling supported by ten marble pillars. Overlooking lofts sit on high over the ballroom, and the three balconies on the north wall (overseeing the wooded garden) are used to house important guests during the Grand Revel, the Feast of Love, and other large gatherings that take place in the ballroom. From the ballroom, worshippers may break off to view more artwork in the display area, seek privacy in the Bowers of Romance (a cushion-filled room that features the temple's opulent heated baths), or attend other needs in the dressing rooms or garderobes. From the ballroom, two staircases lead up to the loft (used for singers or for added space, as needed) and to the musician's loft. Arched flying walkways known as the Lovers' Walks span the gap between the temple's sanctuary and are used for rendezvous and formal rituals. Such arches are found in many temples to Sune throughout the Vast and beyond. Sunites believe that their goddess will bless truehearts who meet on one of these arches. The lower floor features both a fine dinning area and storage spaces.

Behind the temple is a wooded garden with carefully pruned flowering trees, which leave a mix of delightful scents in the air. At the center of the garden stands a fountain with a statue of Sune pouring water out of a pitcher into a basin as the fountain's centerpiece. The sound of crystal wind chimes resonate through the garden with each gentle breeze, while couples seek paths to secluded love nests or one of the garden's three gazebos.

The temple also owns a mountain resort called the Valley of Dolls. The resort is located in a picturesque valley with a small lake a mere two-day walk from Ravens Bluff. However, guests are admitted only if they have an invitation or a priest of the Palace of Passion to vouch for them. This policy is enforced by a contingent of skilled guards.

TEACHINGS OF SUNE

All of these sayings are believed to be the words of Sune. They are recorded in the Sunite holy book titled simply *Love's Lessons*.

"Don't have evil thoughts; they make you squint and that causes crow's feet at the corner of your eyes."

"Surround yourself with beauty—learn to appreciate fine art, music, and a romantic tale. The beauty in sight will naturally uplift your thoughts and goals to greater deeds, a passion toward life, and love for all that is great and good."

"Perform random acts of Love and encourage emotional deeds of Beauty."

"Love no one more than yourself save Sune, and lose yourself in the love of the Lady Firehair."

Many laypersons and even theologians have mistakenly thought the first part of Sune's words imply narcissism. What High Priestess Morlain suggests is that Sune is really speaking about the need to know and cherish yourself, to see the parts of you that are beautiful and to appreciate that beauty. On the subject, she once said, "While one should always strive to emulate the beauty of Sune—both physically and spiritually—you cannot truly love another nor accept love from another if you do not feel worthy of love yourself. The second part simply means to trust Sune and be comforted and secure in her love—the same kind of love that she has showered on Ravens Bluff."

"Children should be raised in the love of Sune with her regime of proper meals, regular exercise, fresh air, regular sleep, and good skin conditioning. Sune's blessing of beauty will be bestowed upon them, yielding little need for cosmetics and illusionary magics as adults."

CLERGY

High Priestess Morlain

Human female, 12th-level Heartwarder

Age: 48 Alignment: CG

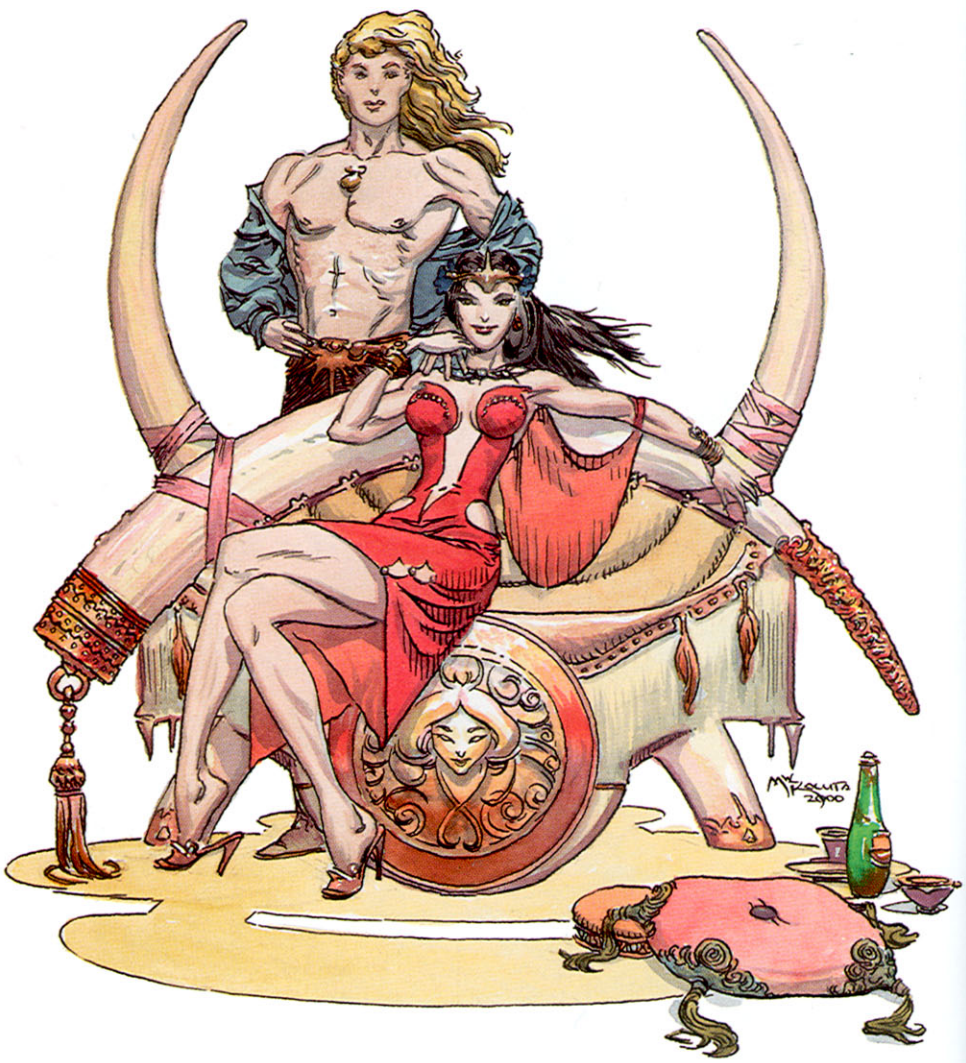
Height: 5'3" Weight: 120 pounds

Hair: Black Eyes: Black

This petite, raven-haired beauty with almond-shaped eyes has led the Palace of Passion off and on for the last five years. Because of her age, younger rival priestesses of outstanding beauty now challenge Morlain for her position. While cosmetics and her keen fashion sense have staved off the threats thus far, Morlain seeks *potions of longevity* to reverse her years. While devoted to her husband, Ilbrar the Iron, she openly admires the physical beauty of others.

Morlain worked closely with Gondar architects to design a new temple that would be an incredible work of art, yet structurally sound.

This unrelenting effort exhausted her. She frequently visits the Valley of Dolls to restore her inner peace of mind. Morlain instigated the outreach program for the homeless of Ravens Bluff and still finds time to teach several classes on clothing and jewelry fashions



MORLAIN AND ILBRAR

Dame Carlotta de Amourette
Human female, 11th-level Heartwarder
Age: 33 Alignment: CG
Height: 5'10" Weight: 160 pounds
Hair: Auburn Eyes: Black

Carlotta arrived in Ravens Bluff shortly after the recent war against Myrkyssa Jelan. She immediately became active in the city's social life and took charge of the temple's parties and festivals. She also joined the Knights of the Golden Rooster and encouraged that organization to upgrade the quality of its parties and to redecorate their headquarters, the Roost. Carlotta leads the toning exercises in the temple's Body Beautiful classes.

While a stunning beauty (and challenger for the position of high priestess), Dame de Amourette is no dainty dame, and can hold her own on the field of combat in her enchanted full plate armor. Carlotta favors the creation of a Ravens Bluff order of the Sisters and Brothers of the Ruby Rose, a holy order dedicated to Sune. She is a strong advocate of a greater role for the temple in the city's affairs.

Candi Kane
Human female, 11th-level Heartwarder
Age: 28 Alignment: CG
Height: 5'7" Weight: 142 pounds
Hair: Strawberry Blonde
Eyes: Emerald green

This young woman has served in the Palace of Passion since she entered the faith some twelve years ago. Very polite and helpful, she radiates an almost painful attraction to her many male admirers. Candi flirts with her would-be beaus, prolonging her courtships into an epic saga. Never married, she remains one of the most sought-after dates for the bachelors of the nobility and knighthoods. This woman is a lover, not a fighter. Strangers who stereotype Candi because of her fabulous looks, blonde hair, and "cute" name are surprised by her brilliant intellect.

Her temple duties include running the Body Beautiful program for the worshippers of Sune. She personally teaches use of cosmetics to enhance beauty and to cover blemishes and advocates proper diet and rest for the body, to grow beautiful bodies among the young and to maintain beauty of the not-so-young. Candi supervises the junior clergy of the temple and catalogs the chronicles of Corwell Fanfare *(See page 45)*.

GREGOR AND CANDI

Aesthetia
Human female, 11th-level Cleric
Age: 35 Alignment: CG
Height: 5'8" Weight: 138 pounds
Hair: Red Eyes: Black

Aesthetia's duties involve running the temple's infirmary and tending to the seriously injured. She is skilled in techniques for wound cleansing and healing that minimize scarring. Painbearers of Ilmater taught Aesthetia much about how tissue and muscles knit when magical healing is unavailable and the nature of scars. Compared to her fellow clergy, Aesthetia has an unusually strong forbearance for the sight of grotesque injuries. She has also studied with the Morninglords of Lathander to learn their birthing techniques.

In any random group of women in Ravens Bluff, Aesthetia would likely be the loveliest female present, but among the Sune priestesses, her beauty is quieter and less dramatic. She has dated many a young man, but has not yet found her lifemate.

Gregor Fenfrill
Human male, 9th-level Heartwarder
Age: 39 Alignment: CG
Height: 6'4" Weight: 220 pounds
Hair: Blonde Eyes: Blue

Gregor is the dashing and charming hunk of the temple. His tanned and muscular body has flustered many a young Ravanian maiden at the numerous summer picnics and beach parties he attends. For more formal occasions, he cuts a debonair figure in his red silk shirt, framed with a black jacket and pants. The female members of nobility and the knighthoods eagerly hunt this bachelor. Gregor's muscles are not just for show; he is quite deadly with a mace. It is rumored that he paid a handsome price for the Wizard's Guild to permanently enchant his armor with a unique spell that keeps dirt and grime away. Gregor has a warm and friendly smile.

Gregor oversees the temple guards and recruits novices for the priesthood. It is no small wonder that more women apply than men.

Ilbrar the Iron
Human male, 7th-level Heartwarder
Age: 42 Alignment: CG
Height: 5'10" Weight: 165 pounds
Hair: Brown Eyes: Brown

Ilbrar is an exceedingly handsome and muscular male specimen, but seeks not to compete with the ladies in the temple for temple leadership. Content with his role as Morlain's husband, he even changed his name (formerly Redford) to that of a hero in a romantic epic to please his wife. As for the nickname, both silly and naughty rumors persist . . . .

Ilbrar manages the administrative duties of the temple. He collects the tithes, inventories the vault, supervises the daily cleaning, purchases supplies, and pays temple debts. He also cares for the temple's holy instruments (the chalice, the mirror, the brush and the comb) and holy symbols used in various rituals.

Perilily
Human female, 6th-level Cleric
Age: 25
Alignment: CG
Height: 5'5"
Weight: 130 pounds
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Brown

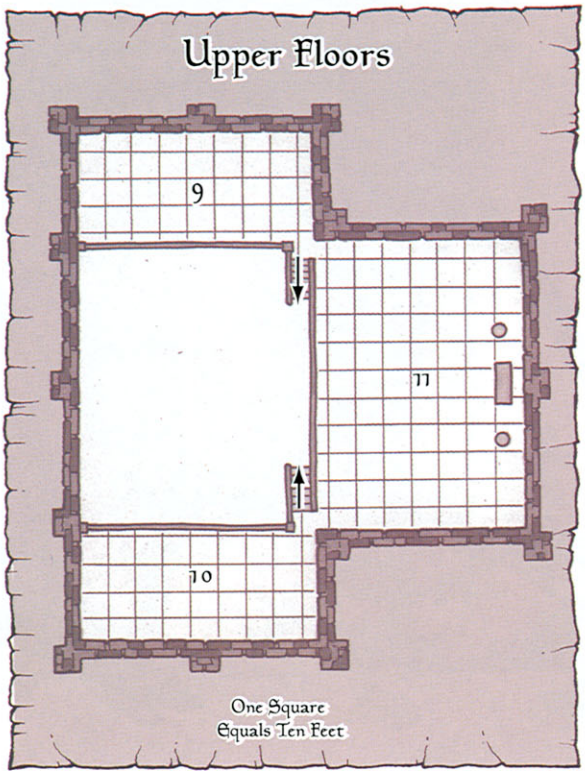
Perilily entered the priesthood about seven years ago and has made slow but steady progress. She is not as intelligent or gorgeous as many of her sisters of Sune, but she is very devout and industrious. Perilily works regularly in the infirmary and often welcomes worshippers and visitors there.

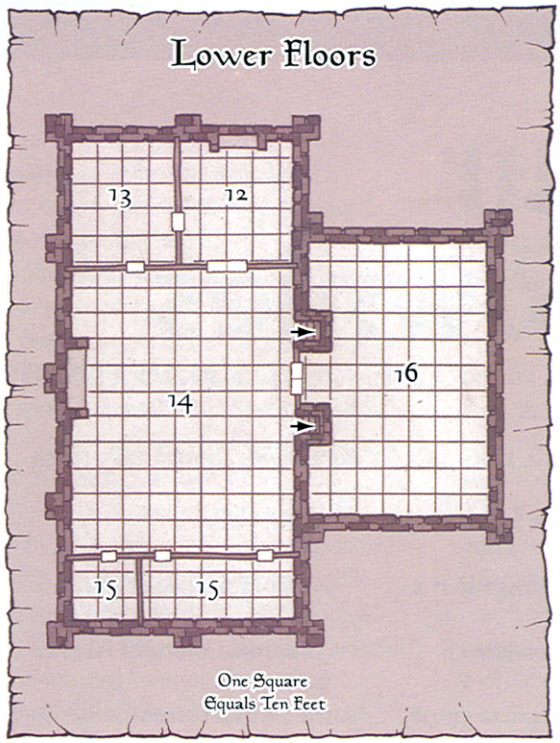
Angela Sunshine
Human female, 4th-Level Heartwarder
Age: 16 Alignment: CG
Height: 5'10" Weight: 160 pounds
Hair: Flame Red Eyes: Blue

Angela became a priestess of Sune last year. Young and sweet, her fresh looks promise future competition with some of the older priestess. Her bubbly enthusiasm for life adds sparkle and zest to the temple parties. Angela is learning how to design romantic dinners and parties, and assisted in the initial Ravens Bluff Beautification Day—she headed the trash detail.

JUNIOR PRIESTS AND PRIESTESS OF THE TEMPLE

Clarice – Human female, 3rd-level Heartwarder
Amber – Half-elf female, 3rd-level Heartwarder
Ruby – Human female, 2nd-level Heartwarder
Tisane – Human female, 1st-level Cleric
Dirk – Human male, 3rd-level Heartwarder
Steel – Half-elf male, 1st-level Heartwarder





SPECIAL VISITING PRIEST

Corwell Fanfare

Human male, Fighter/cleric of indeterminate level

Age: 48 (apparent)Alignment: CG

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 192 pounds

Hair: Auburn

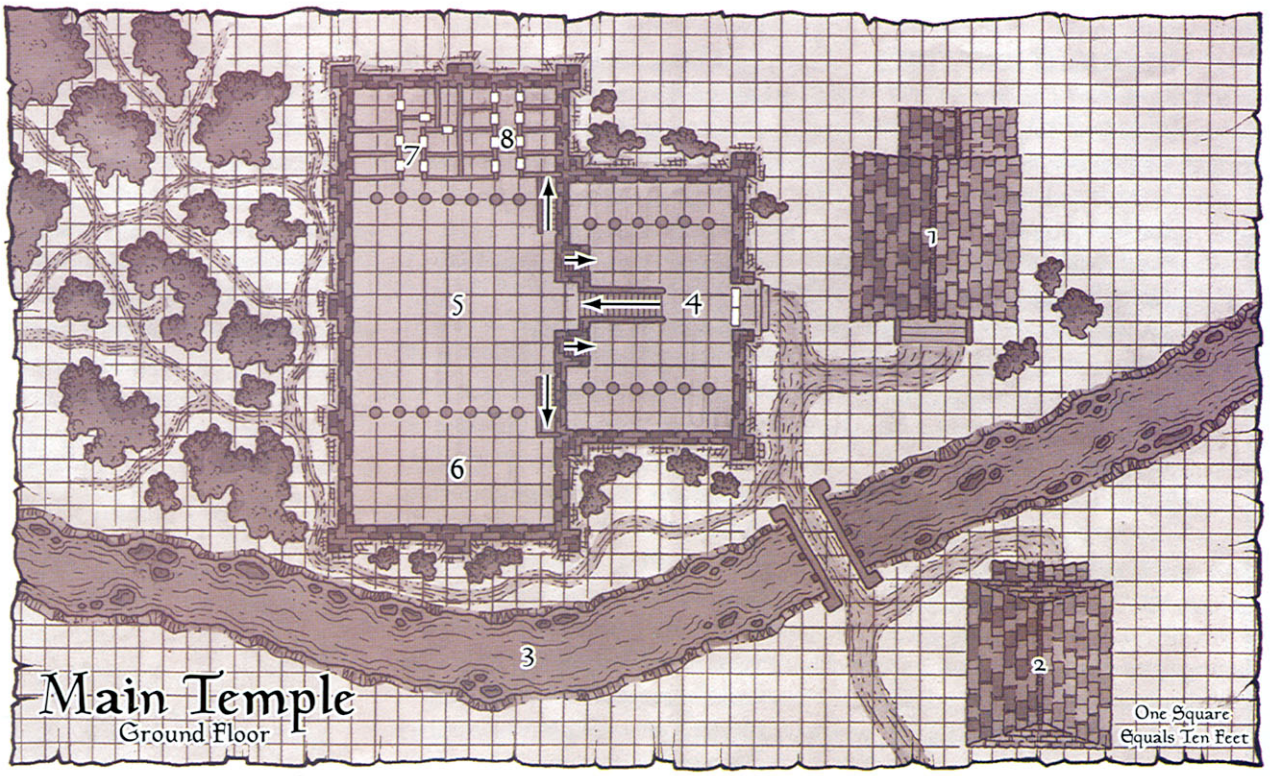
Eyes: Forest Green

Corwell Fanfare is no ordinary man. His body represents the pinnacle of perfection—firm, yet not budging muscles, broad shoulders, golden tan, oval face, shoulder-length hair that frames his face, long, dexterous fingers. His beauty produces awe commonly thought reserved for the gods. (He has a Charisma well above 20.) Corwell is single and likely to remain so; he serves as the mortal champion of Sune.

Corwell travels constantly throughout the Realms, teaching the word of Sune and organizing new temples. He has in recent years visited Arborea to pay homage to Sune herself and learn from her wisdom. Corwell has served as high priest of the Palace of Passion on two occasions, and a room is kept in constant readiness for him should he return. However, rumor has it that Corwell has difficulty withstanding the sight of so much ugliness among the adventuring population of Ravens Bluff, and keeps his rare visits to the city brief for that reason.

LEGEND FOR MAP

1 Infirmary and Contemplation & Teaching Center
2 Clergy Living Quarters
3 DeVillars Creek
4 Main Temple Foyer
5 Grand Ballroom
6 Art Display Area
7 Bowers of Romance
8 Dressing Rooms/Garderobes
9 Loft
10 Musicians' Loft
11 Sanctuary
12 Kitchen
13 Pantry
14 Dining Room
15 Private Dining Rooms
16 Storage



Training Your Thought Brownies

BY SIMON TAYLOR

***Bare Bones* is designed to give game masters "bare bones" outlines and plot ideas to use and abuse in their own games. The concept is simple, a short seedling of an idea that can be nurtured and grown by the game master into a strapping great oak of a story. *Bare Bones* could be plot devices, MacGuffins, tale twists, story concepts, or any other form of idea that can be used to enrich a gaming session. Each issue, I'll explore a different topic to come up with juicy tidbits of ideas that can be used to create a story. *Bare Bones* is completely system independent—whatever game system or world you use, *Bare Bones* should have something for you.**

In this first issue of the new *Polyhedron*, I thought I'd give you a bit of a taste of what *Bare Bones* is all about. There are abundant ideas below on how to gain the inspiration to constantly add detail to your roleplaying campaign.

THOUGHT BROWNIES

Bob Shaw, in his excellent book, *How to Write Science Fiction*, suggests the idea of thought brownies. Thought brownies are the little folk let loose in your head, ready to pick up any stray ideas. By training your pet brownies to keep an eye out for useful ideas, you'll find that inspiration strikes more and more often. Literally imagine that you have these little chaps inside your head. They filter all the thoughts and random nonsense that pass through your mind, waiting until they spot something that could be useful, be it an image, a sound, an expression, a scene in a movie, a chapter in a book, a verse of a poem or a song, whatever. Then they process that idea, notifying your creative functions and filing the idea away for future usage. I know it sounds absurd, but try training your own thought brownies, and see the changes it makes to your creativity! Let's have a look at some thought brownies of my own:

RACING DEMON

There is a terrific play by David Hare called *Racing Demon*. I was fortunate enough to play one of the main parts in this play a few years ago. Two things about this play struck my thought brownies very forcibly, since they lent themselves well to being adapted for gaming scenarios. The first was the subject matter of the play itself. *Racing Demon* is a multi-layered play with lots of complex themes, but the main idea running through it is one of division within the Church of England. Splits of a religious nature as depicted in this play can seem petty to outsiders, but within the context of a religious organization where the conflicting aims of politicized and status-aware clerics can clash heavily with those of a more spiritual nature, it takes on greater significance. In roleplaying terms, imagine a clerical character (or NPC) who loses his faith. If his god is a non-active deity who avoids direct intervention in the ways of man, what is to stop the cleric from remaining in his post and, in all possibility, doing a good and worthwhile charitable job? As happens in *Racing Demon*, what then happens if a positively evangelical curate comes along and questions the faith of the other figure? The

possibilities of playing havoc with the politics of your campaign and of stretching the roleplaying of your players are immense.

The other thought that my brownies captured for me was slightly less serious! As publicity for the show we had some photographs taken down at the local chapel. There were three of us: myself dressed in a traditional collar and suit, and two others, one dressed in a cassock and the other with full surplice. We had to drive down to the chapel, and so we all jumped into one car. The vision of three clerical figures in all their regalia was greeted with consternation by others on the road. Every time we came to a turning or a narrowing of the road, people's reactions were fascinating to watch. The typical brash "King of the Road" attitude held sway until the moment that they saw the nature of the driver and passengers of the other car. As soon as they spotted the collar, cassock and surplice, they adopted an air of embarrassed politeness and immediately gave us right-of-way. This effect of clerical garb upon the populace can be seen in all cultures—my brownies have just dragged up an old file for me of the scene in the movie *The Man Who Would Be King*, when the Buddhist monks walk across the battlefield and the whole battle stops whilst everybody bows to the floor and hides their faces. Just think of the fun you could have in a fantasy campaign with a scene like this!

WARIUCHI

I used to be an avid player of Go, and whilst reading a book on the game I came across a term used by its players. That term was *wariuchi*, which is a wedging move designed to split two groups. Those good old brownies spotted this and applied it to something else that had been whirring round my head for a few days. The other thought was the idea of starting up a cyberpunk superheroes campaign. A kind of near-future dystopian *Dark Champions* game. Wariuchi seemed the perfect name for the setting!

Applying this a little more, it occurred to me that the reasoning behind the name was equally important. And so the Wariuchi campaign was born. Wariuchi is an island complex built on the remains of Hawaii, which has been bought lock, stock, and barrel by a group of corporate conglomerates. Wariuchi is set up as a corporate law and tax haven which, being situated as it is slap-bang in the middle of the Pacific, provides the perfect base for high-technology companies wanting to capture that Pacific Rim market. The wedging move idea spawned other ideas about world politics and the campaign grew and grew from that basic premise.

By training your pet brownies to keep an eye out for useful ideas, you'll find that inspiration strikes more and more often.

NEWSCORP

This time, my brownies captured something from an article in a computer magazine. The article was a fairly dry account of how Internet push models work in comparison to pull models. That is, the idea that your computer or software identifies your tastes and sends you information according to those tastes. The brownies in my head realized that this was an ideal way of exploring a character's background and increasing the roleplaying and character development potential of characters in my campaign. I first applied this to Wariuchi and it worked pretty much as follows—each character is given a sheet (or it can be done online, which is even better) wherein they enter their likes, dislikes, tastes and information requirements. The beauty of this is that not only does it help delineate the character, but it also helps in plot creation.

Suppose the character concerned was a vigilante type who wanted to be kept up-to-date with all information on crimes involving jewel heists. This means every time a jewel heist takes place, he is informed and can follow up any leads that seem pertinent. The information can of course be narrowed down by changing the search criteria. Thus, only jewel heists occurring on Wariuchi on the night of a full moon by an individual wearing a Bill Clinton mask are reported to him. Add to this the potential for instant alerts, and you have a ready-made plot device creator. If the character has a pager, or a more high-tech equivalent, the second a pertinent report comes in he can be alerted and dash to the scene of the crime. Other snippets of information can be used as red herrings or simply as a way of getting some roleplaying done without actually needing a plot-line. For example the character expresses an interest in flower arranging, and so is informed that the world famous flower arranger Rose Floribunda is visiting to give a demonstration at a nearby civic hall. Attending the show, the character meets and falls desperately in love with Ms. Floribunda.

I hope this little article has shown you the power of the thought brownies. Keep the little blighters fed and they will keep you well supplied with plots, stories and ideas.

I welcome feedback on any aspect of *Bare Bones*, and am particularly keen to hear from anybody who uses any of the ideas presented. You can contact me at simon@jester.il2.com. Good gaming!

Three Days to Kill

You've done it all. You've saved the princess and defeated the dragon. You've roleplayed your way out of mass carnage and saved the universe yet again. Maybe you want a change of pace. Maybe you have *Three Days to Kill*! With *Three Days to Kill*, John Tynes and Atlas Games present a dark adventure tailor-made for the gritty at heart. *Three Days* is designed for characters between 1st and 3rd level, and is the first in Atlas' *Penumbra* line of d20 System products.

Fully compatible with the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, the adventure is set in a valley simply called The Deeps. At the heart of this valley is the corrupt village of Deeptown, a stopping point for caravans cutting across the mountains. Deeptown is home to organized banditry by way of taxation, cults and religions both malignant and benign, and a covert power struggle between rival bandit lords for control of the countryside and the business of pilfering caravans.

In *Three Days to Kill*, the PCs are hired to disrupt a secret meeting of one of these bandit lords, Lucien, and his unknown potential ally. While the mission does not require the PCs to murder Lucien, the reward is doubled if he is killed.

That's right, doubled.

Sure, the paladin in the party will be appalled, but maybe he should just sit this one out. The stakes are too high for that kind of do-gooder.

If you like your adventures grungy with a dash of moral ambiguity, you'll love tromping around The Deeps. At the same time, in case your adventuring group is a bunch of upright law-lovers, the adventure provides an alternative hook that lacks the mercenary glee of the first, but does a serviceable job of getting the action rolling. The great thing about *Three Days to Kill* is that fans of both play styles will enjoy it.

The adventure is well written and provides plenty of background information to flesh out the town. Half of the product is background material about The Deeps and of Deeptown. While some may cringe at the simplistic names of places and temples in adventure, they were made inten-

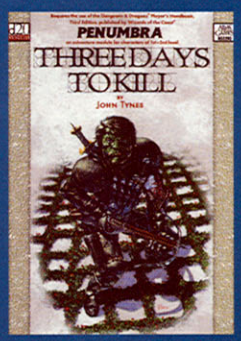
What is the d20 System?
Take your new D&D *Player's Handbook*, carve off the fleshy flavor text like a Thanksgiving turkey, and what you've got left is the d20 System. According to a free license that took its cue from open source code of programming languages such as Linux, Wizards of the Coast has allowed third parties to develop adventures and accessories that use, at their heart, a stripped-down version of the D&D rules. As of this issue's press date, the license is still in draft form, but that hasn't stopped a number of companies from producing adventures using a prototype of the agreement. To take a peek at the open gaming license, point your Web browser to www.opengamingfoundation.org.

Hungry for more d20 offerings?
Check out: *Death In Freeport*, by Chris Pramas. The hunt for a missing librarian in a city ruled by a pirate king leads to complications with a local cult dedicated to an ancient evil. Piratical intrigue abounds in this city-based adventure designed for characters of levels 1-3. Available for $7.99 wherever you buy roleplaying games. Published by Green Ronin Press.

The Wizard's Amulet, by Clark Peterson and Bill Webb. A group of pre-generated low-level, good-aligned adventurers set out to plunder a dead wizard's tower and get caught up in a rivalry between two apprentice spellcasters.

Available for free download from Necromancer Games www.necromancergames.com.

The Tomb of Malkovitch, by Ian R. Malcomson. A puzzle-filled dungeon crawl in the tomb of an ancient hero introduces the fantasy world of Aldor in an adventure designed for low- to mid-level characters. Published by Mystical Alchemy Gameworks, and available for free download at **www.d20games.com**.



Three Days to Kill
A 32-page d20 System Adventure
By John Tynes
Published by Atlas Games
$8.95

Disrupt a meeting between a bandit lord and his mysterious new allies in this dark, dangerous new adventure. A smart d20 game starter, this gritty gem will become a short-term favorite for those eager to kick off their Third Edition play.

Accessibility:	2
Art:	3
Design:	4
Value:	5

tionally vague to ease the DM's work in converting the adventure for his or her own particular campaign. Deity names are never used, making that transition even easier. Still, there's a lot of interesting stuff going on in The Deeps, and Tynes presents enough hooks in the scenario text to keep adventures going for as long as an inventive DM desires. Dark temples, secret rites conducted in the hills by other cultists, and orc tribes coming down for a raid or two are just some the hooks presented for further play.

The illustrations and graphic layout are stylish and fit the darkness of the plot. On the other hand, the cover art touts what can only be described as the Incredible Hulk's fantasy cousin. Greeny has nothing to do with the adventure, but *Three Days to Kill* has so much going for it that his stern gaze shouldn't stop you from giving it a perusal. The maps, created using the Campaign Cartographer program, are not very aesthetically pleasing, but probably helped keep the production cost down. For just under nine bucks, you get quite a value.

—Stephen Radney-MacFarland

ORK! The Roleplaying Game

Since the early days of RPGs, players have always wanted to play monster characters. Look at the profusion of drow among D&D® players, the slow mainstreaming of humanoid archetypes in *Shadowrun* and *Earthdawn*, or the success of the *Dungeon Master* computer game. Steve Jackson Games produced *Goblins* for GURPS, and if that isn't enough, John Wick recently released *Orkworld*, which promises "a comprehensive look at ork society from the ground up" that will prove orks are "no longer brainless raiders." Such a treatment should never, ever be confused with *ORK! The Roleplaying Game*.

ORK! takes all the theories of monsters not always being bad people, chews them up, pukes them out, and then stomps on them for good measure. Miller and Pramas label it a "beer and pretzels" game—something to break out when everything has devolved into jokes and giggles, and you know nothing serious is going to happen around the gaming table. The game doesn't take itself seriously for a minute, but you might be surprised to find the game is a great lampoon of those fantasy sourcebooks that do put a serious spin on orks and other monsters. In *ORK!*, the only purpose anything has is to die, be eaten, or both.

Miller and Pramas have created a very readable and very playable game in *ORK!* Some might suggest that the mechanics are faulty, that there is little depth to the game, or that it's just plain gross. These critics miss the point. *ORK!* is not meant to be the next *Traveller*, or World of Darkness. It is not meant to be run as a long term campaign. It is meant to be gross, juvenile fun, appealing to that deep-seeded love of toilet humor in all of us.

If you're looking for a deep and meaningful experience in the World of Orkness, you're setting yourself up for trollbait. In *ORK!*, players assume the role of—you guessed it—orks! Orks are mean and nasty creatures vomited up by a vengeful and angry god who commands them to kill every race that came before them and maybe they'll get a treat in the end. Orks, always happy to rip, tear, and destroy, take up this challenge with reckless abandon. The game is skill-based, if you can call talents like drink, smash, eyeball, and scent skills.

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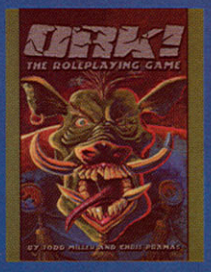


Ork! The Roleplaying Game
A 64-page stand-alone RPG
By Todd Miller
and Chris Pramas
Published by
Green Ronin Publishing
$12.95

Explore the "World of Orkness" in this stand-alone beer and pretzels game. Ork! is juvenile, irreverent, violent, gross, and bereft of anything resembling good taste. Naturally, we loved it.

Accessibility:	4
Art:	2
Design:	3
Value:	3

All characters have four attributes: Meat (raw physical power), Twitch (stealth and cunning), Bones (toughness and stamina), and Mojo (innate magical power and natural charisma). Every skill is based on an attribute.

The dice mechanics are simple. Every attribute is rated as a die type: d12, d8, d6, etc. Skills are rated in ranks: 1, 2, 3. . . you get the picture. When you want to perform an action, you roll a number of attribute dice equal to your skill rank. Hence, a sneaking ork with a d4 in Twitch and a 3 in sneak rolls 3d4. Sounds easy, right? Difficulty is determined randomly by the GM. Yes, I said randomly. Figure out how difficult something might be and roll a number of d-whatevers. Your total is the difficulty necessary to succeed. This simulates the fickle nature of the orks' angry god. Everything, including combat, is based on this mechanic.

The book is divided into two halves. The first deals with ork society, customs and magic. You could probably have summed up everything in these chapters in two pages, but what fun would that be? The second half deals with character creation, combat, magic, and all the rest of the standard rpg trappings. Not bad, considering the book is only 64 pages long.

—Tom Harrison

JLA Sourcebook

From the beat-up pile of Batman, Superman, and Green Lantern comics on Local Activities Coordinator Scott Magner's desk to my limited edition porcelain Starman statue and Justice Society of America poster, the RPGA office is probably the most DC-friendly corner in all of Wizards of the Coast. The noontime Wednesday trip to our local comics retailer has become something of a legend around these parts, sacrosanct from interruption by meetings or even minor workplace fire emergencies. To put it lightly, we're huge DC goobers around here, and I'm the worst of the bunch.

So it was with a fanboyish smile that I snagged a copy of the *JLA Sourcebook* at the Gen Con® Game Fair, eager to see what West End would do with The World's Greatest Super-Heroes. The end result turns out to be a rather satisfying overview of the team, along with some weaker material expanding the rules of the game and offering tips for better play.

The book opens with an essay on the JLA's history, including an interesting set of bylaws and even a half-page membership certificate. The following chapters detail the members, allies, and enemies of the Justice's League's first year, taken directly from the successful "JLA: Year One" miniseries of two years ago. Each major hero is afforded a full page, with an excellent illustration and space divided about evenly between game information and background/personality notes. The Year One chapter shows the team at a weaker, less confidant point, and it's interesting to compare the power level of heroes like Aquaman and the Martian Manhunter in their early and current incarnations (both, by the way, have grown more in versatility than in raw power). Additional characters from the miniseries, such as the Doom Patrol and Snapper Carr, easily could have been skipped, and it's nice to see them represented here.

Next, it's the current roster's turn in the spotlight. These are the most powerful heroes in the DC Universe, the so-called "Big Seven": Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Green Lantern, Aquaman, Flash, and the Martian Manhunter (and, uh, Plastic Man). As such, their abilities test the limits of West End's system. The Flash's Speed Manipulation power, for instance, requires the player to roll *18* dice. That's fun for a while, but sooner or later you're bound to wonder if there might have been a more elegant approach. Second stringers such as Adam Strange and Oracle round out the section, along with a healthy dose of evil by way of the Star Conquerer and the Injustice Gang.

A superfluous and unwelcome diversion into the realm of Young Justice, the kiddy superhero team that features Impulse, Robin, Secret, Superboy, Wonder Girl, and Arowette follows, and the less said about that, the better. The space given to this virtually unrelated team (some 19 pages) would have been better devoted to detailing members of different eras of the JLA, such as Captain Atom, Firestorm, Blue Beetle, etc.

The second half of the book presents a number of rules options. An incredibly repetitive section on punching up the core

game's Manipulation powers reads as if the designers chose to "balance" each class of energy manipulation by making them all exactly the same. Have 15D in your energy manipulation power? You can transform into an elemental of your type. This could have been said once, rather than a half-dozen times. Still, the section provides a good framework, and is a nice expansion on the material in the core rules. A blasé chapter on creating androids and robots (the latter are equipment, not characters) follows. An excellent section on how to deal with a team of heroes that could most likely solve most major problems alone (indeed, one suggestion is to divide the team into subgroups to handle specialized threats) comes next.

The entire effort is capped by "Time After Time," an adventure that pits the heroes against three time-manipulating enemies that might make a fantastic comic book. It makes a terrible adventure, however, replete with mid-combat soliloquies on behalf of (literal) *deus ex machina* Hourman, who could end the threat himself without batting an android eyelash. One combat, against Amazo (who absorbs the powers of the Justice League), requires that the PCs know detailed out-of-character information about each hero's weaknesses (you know, the kind of information they keep secret and that you can only learn by reading about them in comic books). The entire mess degenerates from there, throwing in cameo after cameo instead of providing a solid adventure.

As an informational resource, the *JLA Sourcebook* is the jewel of West End's young DCU franchise. Graphically, it seems as though the game has finally found a format. Previous products have suffered from ugly layout and often even uglier art. This time, both are top-notch. Despite the fact that it took eleven people to design this (that's a new designer every 14.5 pages, folks), the "voice" stays constant most of the way through (the android chapter is a notable exception, and not for the better). Though the rules sections are hit-and-miss, the character profiles are worthwhile to both game and comics fans. That bodes well for West End, who have a slew of similar products in the offing.

—Erik Mona

JLA Sourcebook
A 160-page sourcebook for the DC Universe RPG
By Mark Barnabo, Jack Emmert, Matt Forbeck, Fred Jandt, Steve Kenson, Chris McGlothlin, Michee Rose, Aaron Rosenberg, David Ross, Jim Spivey, and Nikola Vrtis (!)
Published by West End Games
$21.00

The most powerful team of superheroes in the DC Universe (or any universe, for that matter), presented from its origin to the present day, with biographies and statistics of current and former team members, sidekicks, enemies, and equipment. Additional rules for handling "Superman-class" heroes are included, along with new powers, rules for time travel, and information on playing android characters.

Accessibility:	3
Art:	5
Design:	3
Value:	3

HârnManor

If you're like most fantasy game masters, you throw around words like "lord" and "serf" without knowing exactly what you're talking about. Chances are, the countrysides of your campaign world are filled with villages (most likely managed by the ubiquitous "town council") that are little more than re-supply stops between well-designed dungeons and cities. Those who desire more "fantasy realism" and detail in their campaigns need look no further than Columbia Games' HârnManor.

The book's 78 hole-punched cardstock pages are not bound, as they are meant to be placed in a binder along with Columbia's other excellent *Hârn* material. (Though *HârnManor* uses the terminology of the *HârnMaster* series of supplements, the sourcebook contains tips and suggestions worthy of any fantasy campaign, and the material is presented with adaptation to any fantasy gaming system in mind.) The pages are sturdy and durable. Art is sparse and simplistic, but it's presented in a "woodcut" style that's wholly appropriate to the subject matter. Information is presented in two columns, with the right (smaller) column containing

helpful quick-references for what otherwise might be complicated terminology. This is heady stuff, meant for those gamers with a strong attention to detail.

HârnManor opens with a detailed essay on manor life, focusing on the lot of the peasant. The section contains information on how land is managed, how power is divided between the free and the unfree, and even what the rural peasant is likely to eat from day to day. (Two recipes, for maslin bread and country ale, might be used to add a little verisimilitude to your gaming sessions. Why allow your players the joy of a greasy slice of pizza when they can "get into the game" by downing some authentic serf food?)

From the general introduction, the book moves to the specific. The *really* specific.

A section on village generation includes rules for determining the size of your village, the class of every resident and their occupation (including slave and a host of Medieval professions, all of which are explained in full detail), and the feudal obligations (how many men he must provide for military service) of the local lord. A helpful calendar of events (your villagers will be harvesting flax in late summer) is useful for spicing up encounters at whatever time your band of adventurers happens to be passing through. Dozens of familiar and not-so-familiar terms are explained in a fascinating glossary (a "childwite" is a fine levied for bearing a child out of wedlock; "pannage" is an annual fee paid in exchange for the right to graze pigs in the lord's woods). Four pages of event charts suggest anything from Viking raids to economic collapse to an onset of the plague, as well as dozens of other happenings (most of them very, very bad).

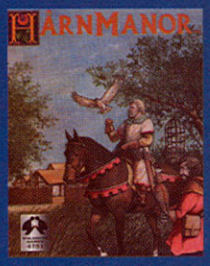
All of this information can be tracked on one of two forms included on a special pad of paper enclosed with the product. The rather math-intensive tracking system presented in the book is likely to make most game masters wonder if it's really worth it, but even if chucked completely, the guidelines and historical reference that accompany the rules makes *HârnManor* a must-have for the detail-oriented game master.

The product closes with four sample manor villages which provide different applications of the information in the first half of the book. Each includes detailed GM maps, as well as unlabeled color maps for the players, a Hârn tradition that many consider the game's strongest asset. Unlike the trend toward lazy "picture maps" seen in so many recent products, Hârn maps are meticulously crafted overhead shots you can present to your players, allowing them to travel from point to point, exploring the entire village. Detailed interior maps accompany important structures. Craftsmens' shops, manor houses, monasteries and more can be found within. It's easy to photocopy these maps and use them as generic templates over and over again. When it comes to maps, Columbia Games is the best in the business.

Their creative designs deserve mention, too. In Avonel, everyone is sleeping with everyone else and a greedy guardian manipulates an underage lord. Kindly priests oversee the village of Clord as a hospice, secluded on an island for the protection of its leper inhabitants. In rural Roganter, a brigand group known as the Black Boot seeks to dominate local mining operations. Vikings rule poor Turenborg, where a conquered people scheme against their alien overlords. These villages are skillfully detailed, with each resident having relations with another such that the entire community makes sense as a single whole.

Not everyone will appreciate the nearly obsessive detail of *HârnManor*. Those who do will find it an invaluable resource that gives life to what might otherwise be dreary stopovers from one point to another. As an informative resource that manages also to be a great roleplaying supplement, *HârnManor* cannot be beat.

—Erik Mona



HârnManor
A 78-page RPG supplement with 50 manor tracking forms
By N. Robin Crossby, Tom Dalgliesh, Jonathan Davidson, and John Sgammato
Published by Columbia Games, Inc.
$29.98

The ultimate sourcebook on generating realistic Medieval feudal manor villages for fantasy campaigns, HârnManor provides an overview of manorial society, rules for managing your own manor, and four detailed manor villages in the HârnWorld setting.

Accessibility:	4
Art:	4
Design:	5
Value:	5

The Wild, Wild Web

BY ED GIBSON

This month we're taking a trip into the lands of lions, tigers, and bears (oh my!). The first stop is for provisions. Have you ever wanted to draw a map for your players, but didn't have any graph paper or the paper you have is the wrong size or design? Now you can custom design your own graph paper using a freeware program available at http://perso.easynet.fr/~philimar/graphpapeng.htm. Rectangles, hexagons, and diamonds can all be used to design your creations. The output can be printed or written to the Windows clipboard for use in applications that can handle metafiles. Sorry Mac users, the program is Windows specific.

An excellent site for designing wilderness adventures is http:// www.mungopark.com/default.asp. While the site has more text than pictures and has some gratuitous commercial placements, the good qualities far exceed any shortcomings. From dinosaur hunting in North America to mountain climbing in China, from the space shuttle to Antarctica, it presents a variety of outdoor excursions for the reader. The photographs provided are excellent. Visit the Eastern Highland mudmen in the Papua New Guinea media trip for photographs suitable for use in DARK MATTER,™ *Call of Cthulhu*, or even some DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS® adventures. The New Guinea section also discusses the mysterious 1961 disappearance of Michael Rockefeller, son of Nelson Rockefeller, heir to the Rockefeller fortune and then governor of New York. The Web site supplies background information about the case, and the disappearance could be worked into an adventure in any campaign set in the present day.

The most valuable Mungo Park site offering is in the dossier section. It provides information to help you plan your visit to the locales listed. For example, the Antarctica dossier section provides information on tours, as well as typical local weather and appropriate clothing for that weather. A selection of books and videos covering the area are listed. Many listings include ordering information. Finally, links to other Web sites are provided. The Byrd Polar Research Center site offers a variety of information and links. Visit http://www.ees.nmt.edu/Geop/Erebus/htmlfiles/lavalake.html for a spectacular picture of a lake of molten lava at Mount Erebus, Antarctica, the world's southernmost active volcano. I looked for, but couldn't find, a web-cam for the region.

The Web site supplies background information about the case, and the disappearance could be worked into an adventure in any campaign set in the present day.

On the LIVING JUNGLE™ mailing list, Stephen Jay provided a pointer to the next site. The article is located at http://www.herper.com/AFmystery.html. Titled "Africa's Mystery Beasts," the article is written from a European (and pre-political correctness) point of view. I could see immediate applications of the article to both the LIVING JUNGLE and LIVING DEATH™ campaigns, and saved it for future reference. However, when I went up a level on the Web site, I ended up at http:// www.herper.com/Crypto.html. This page deals with "Crypto-zoology," the study and search for hidden animals. There are reprints of articles about the search for creatures ranging from the brontosaurus to the African unicorn. Big Foot also makes an appearance.

One of the links from the Cryptozoology site is http://home.fuse.net/rschaffner. This site offers information on current investigations into Big Foot and the Lake Erie kin to Nessie of the Loch Ness. There are several reports (including a video clip) of "South Bay Bessie." The "News from the Past" section provides newspaper accounts between the years 1829 and 1958 reporting encounters with giants, wild men, and even a sea serpent. These could provide background information for a modern day campaign or contemporary events for campaigns set in the past. Finally, the "Recent News of Interest" section provides current events in the field of unusual creatures. One of the articles details how a 30 lb. beaver terrorized a Canadian woman and her two 200 lb. dogs. The site includes such a variety of interesting links and information that we'll be returning there in a future column.

That's all for this issue. If you have any questions or suggested sites for future issues, please send them to polyhedron@wizards.com.

The Big Ones—A Look

2000 GEN CON GAME FAIR (US) AUGUST 10-13

This year's GEN CON® Game Fair was all about Third Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS.® On the Wednesday before the show, RPGA® judges were the special guests of Wizards of the Coast's entire RPG R&D department as part of DM Boot Camp, a special program to help our judges get a jump on the new rules. While half of the nearly 250 attendees played demos with the designers, the other half engaged in a question-and-answer session with RPG brand managers, creative directors, and core rules designers. At the end of the session, marketing guru Brian Mitchell showed off a slide show of dozens of never-before-seen concept sketches and final illustrations from the *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*. The dragons, in particular, received wild applause.

The pre-con day closed with the annual Members Meeting, which as far as I could tell was as well-attended as any had been in the recent past. Anticipation was high for the release of the *Player's Handbook* the next morning, and most members shuffled out of the arena with smiles on their faces, heading to popular late-night spots like

US: Gen Con is all about new member recruitment . . . .

US: Members of the Roleplayers Guild of Kansas City hold down the RPGA booth in the Wizards castle.

US: Judge coordination demigod Don Weatherbee (left) gets a well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award (and handshake) from HQ Manager Robert Wiese.

Back at Gen Con

US: Living City director Brooks Banks goes to Gen Con to pick up women.

Major Goolsby's or the Safe House.

The games began fast and furious on Thursday morning. Events like the enormously popular *Barbarian Lives* and the D&D® Open (Network HQ Manager Robert Wiese's opus, *Finger of the Wind*) gave many Gen Con attendees their fist taste of Third Edition, while games such as Feng Shui, Legend of the Five Rings, Amber, and Sovereign Stone rounded out one of the most diverse offerings of RPGA-sanctioned roleplaying games in recent memory.

The night closed with the ever-popular Living City™ Interactive, which introduced new campaign expansions for players of elf and dwarf characters. In the immense dealer's room, the throng surged to the Wizards of the Coast castle, picking up their *Players Handbooks* in record numbers.

Though it was the star of the show, Third Edition wasn't the only reason to head to the dealer's room. New games such as Shard of the Stone, Underground, Orkworld, Ork! (it was a good year for orcs), Sketch, and others, as well as new supplements for existing games like the *JLA Sourcebook* for the DCU RPG, *Apocrypha Too* for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, and a host of new

US: Living City Wizards Guild Coordinator Jason Nichols is selling something, but we're not sure we're buying.

US: Dungeon Master's Guide *author Monte Cook runs a round of the D&D Open.*

material for the Hero Wars game provided more than enough temptation for even the most rabidly anti-D&D zealot.

On Friday, the RPGA focus shifted to LIVING GREYHAWK™, the Network's newest shared-world campaign, and the first to use the new Third Edition D&D rules engine. A special preview issue of our sister magazine, the *LIVING GREYHAWK Journal*, was distributed to all GEN CON attendees, encouraging everyone at the show to come over to the arena and give the new campaign a try. Over the course of the weekend, we ran 305 tables of LIVING GREYHAWK events, most of which were filled to the seven-player capacity. It was an enormously gratifying launch and the culmination of a lot of work by a lot of great people.

"I am Regdar. Hear me roar!"

Saturday brought with it the LIVING DEATH™ Interactive, a fantastic live-action game that set a new standard for LARPs at the show of shows. Campaign coordinator Claire Hoffman and her crack staff spent most of the day setting up Solomon-Juneau Hall as a replica of the 1893 World's Fair, complete with snake charmers, belly dancers, and a real live mummy! I can't recall ever seeing another American interactive with so many attendees in costume. If you haven't given the campaign a chance, you're really missing out on something special.

All good things must come to an end, alas, and by Sunday, everything started winding down to the annual award ceremony. The final slot of the convention saw the remaining teams in the D&D Open control their heroes, the Citadel of Eight (of GREYHAWK® fame), against a diabolical otherworldly plot. Meanwhile, D&D Open coordinator Larry Hull was faced with a more difficult dilemma—organizing the largest Open in the history of the GEN CON Game Fair! Larry and his staff orchestrated 130 tables of players over the weekend. In all, 1,040 players participated in the event.

GEN CON'S other premier event, the invitation-only D&D National Championships, featured fierce competition throughout the weekend. In the end, Laurie Fox of Missouri emerged victorious. For a list of all GEN CON tournament results visit www.rpga.com

I'll close with some numbers. At this year's show, we ran 1,308 tables of sanctioned role-

playing events. In all, 2,552 gamers participated in RPGA activities, an all-time record. Those numbers are a testament to the hard work of all the volunteers who pitched in to help run the show. Enormous thanks go to Don Weatherbee, who organized the judges, Cheryl Frech, who kept things going at HQ, head marshal Willi Burger, the Roleplayers Guild of Kansas City, who pitched in at demos and our booth in the exhibit hall, and the hundreds of other HQ helpers, marshals, and judges who made this year's GEN CON the most successful yet. We'll see you next year, folks.

—ERIK MONA

GEN CON UK AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 3

This year GEN CON UK celebrated its 11th year with the largest convention to date. It featured more events, more people, and more socialising. All I can say is, we want more! As usual, weather in England was a mixed bag, but that didn't stop the fun at this new location. UMIST, in Manchester, proved to be great hosts, and both the campus staff and security were fantastic, friendly, helpful, and very accommodating. We never ran out of rooms to play in. It was games, games, and more games all the way.

The large trade hall was constantly busy with the sale of high-quality gaming products. Both card and roleplaying gamers could get almost anything they wanted. The bring-and-buy proved to be a massive hit, doing fabulous trade with some great products. The hall also featured artist booths, which were more akin to the entry gates of a football stadium, as everyone was queuing to meet the legendary attendees whose skills have become forever linked with the gaming industry.

The guests were fantastic, and enriched the whole GEN CON UK experience. Michael Sheard, Larry Elmore, Gary Gygax, Peter Woodwood, and R A Salvatore (to name a few) were true deities, always willing to stop and sign this and that and talk about what they had done in the past, and what they wanted to do in the future. I understand Larry Elmore even stopped and spoke via mobile phone to one of the attendees' wives, while drawing a piece of artwork for her. Gary Gygax's signing hand must have been topped up with adamantine; nearly everyone seemed to want him to sign new and old DUNGEONS & DRAGONS gaming gear. The quality of these guests was a true credit to the GEN CON team, and it was icing on the cake for four days of great gaming. Thanks to all the guests, you all did an outstanding job. I hope we see you at more conventions around the world.

The RPGA ran a staggering amount of new scenarios and tournaments that drew in both new and old blood to the hobby. Mark Smith's "Mega Dungeon" drew a fantastic crowd of roleplayers whose sole aim was to see how many things they could kill within four days. It was a true hack and slash dungeon bash, and I'm just a bit jealous that I didn't get to play. SARBREENAR: THE LIVING CITY™ was joined by the newly launched LIVING GREYHAWK. These games were constantly busy, as people wanted to try their hand at the new Third Edition D&D LIVING™ environment as well as the existing ones. The DCI was also extremely busy, running vast amounts of card game tournaments.

Live events included demonstrations of Medieval combat, a LIVING GREYHAWK Pig Roast, SARBREENAR: THE LIVING CITY'S High Harvest Festival, Vampire: The Masquerade, and many more. The charity auction drew in a host of people to bid on some great unique items. Michael Sheard, auctioneer extreme, did a grand job, and getting free beers depending on the size of your bid

Benelux: Ann Van Dam takes in the calm before the storm.

made for an evening of great entertainment.

I would just like to say a special thanks to all those involved in the organization of GEN CON UK. Clair, Ratty, Alison, Sad, Paul, Mark, Andrew, Sean, Steve, Chris, Stephen—there are too many names to mention a full list, but they know who they are.

—SEAN CONNOR

GEN CON BENELUX SEPTEMBER 23-24

Imagine a large, I mean very large, I mean *exceptionally* large empty ridged fixed tent, 550 feet long and 90 feet wide. Now imagine a large empty warehouse, 400 feet long by 300 feet wide. Link the two together, fill the warehouse with traders and the massive tent with all kinds of gamers, and you have a basic image of GEN CON Benelux, held in Hertogenbosach, Netherlands. Now in its third year, this year's GEN CON was filled with a very relaxed and extremely friendly crowd, all of whom were hungry for two days of non-stop gaming. This year the convention was teamed with De Stripdagen, a popular comic book fair, which ensured that more than just gaming was going on.

Some 17,000 visitors attended the trade hall and gaming area during the long days of the convention's weekend. When I say long, I don't mean drawn out, but rather full of action. The socialising skills of extremely friendly gamers certainly helped to keep the atmosphere both relaxed and exciting at the same time.

European Branch Manager Ann Van Dam invited some of the GEN CON UK staff to come over and lend a hand. Ratty, Mark Smith, Ian Richards, and myself (Sean Connor) attended what we thought would be an average-sized convention. Not so.

We put together the DMs' lounge, installed computers to help manage players, scoring, the database, and printing. That evening, we attended a briefing for DMs and volunteers, where we discussed such topics as DM marking and the new LIVING GREYHAWK campaign. Wizards of the Coast brand managers Jim Butler and Ryan Dancy discussed Third Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and the future. JD, Cindi, Tom, et al., thanks to you guys for sharing all those secrets.

The trade hall had almost everything: giant Pokemon characters, bring-and-buy stalls, cards, all manner of gaming products, comics, cards, Pokemon skittles (now that was fun), a big red dragon, the Third Edition D&D launch, special guests, RPGA merchan-

dise, cards, a Pokemon play area, comics, and last but not least, some more cards. Vendors sold a variety of foods from all over Europe—now *that* was a great idea!

The LIVING GREYHAWK campaign was launched with the assistance of the local Regional Triad, which has been assigned the Kingdom of Sunndi. The Star Wars Roleplaying Game got its European debut at the show, with some demo games run by JD Wiker, one of the game's designers. The demos were a treat; Star Wars will most definitely be a hit. In my humble opinion, LIVING FORCE will take Europe by storm.

As you walked from the gaming tent entrance to the RPGA area (the so-called Gaming Alley), you passed 100+ tables of DCI tournaments, Decipher card games, Robo Rally tournaments, MechTech, and more. Everyone seemed willing to try everything, which was really great to see. The only common regret was that the walk down Gaming Alley was over too quickly, but that didn't really matter, as most attendees realised that they had to walk back up the same alley to get out of the gaming tent!

Benelux: Mark Smith unleashes a new Mythos horror upon unsuspecting European gamers.

The RPGA volunteers had a fantastic time. Everyone was so social, talking, gaming, and generally happy. Everyone always seemed to have a smile on their faces. It was very refreshing to see the gamers give everything they had into their characters, making them come alive, and then seeing them ten hours later with that same happy grin.

Sunday saw what I believe is a first for GEN CON Benelux—a wedding. Maya Deva Kniese and Bas Vermeulen tied the knot, and looked fantastic doing so (as did the 100-or-so wedding guests).

Conventions around the world could learn something from GEN CON Benelux about how to create a great atmosphere. Even though the convention lasted only two days, the great atmosphere made it seem longer (and maybe it will be next year). Well done to all those concerned. A special thanks to Ann, Ratty, Mark, Pieter, Marcus, and all the DMs for being so relaxed and able to handle us foreigners. In all, we ran 53 tables, exposing the Network to just under 300 gamers. All I can say is bring on more volunteers, more DMs, and more conventions in Europe!

Let's get busy with the future of gaming!

—SEAN CONNOR

C L U B

2000 NETWORK CLUBS DECATHLON UPDATE

The Network Clubs Decathlon is an annual competition that puts the creative and playing talents of our Network Clubs to the test. Clubs select and enter ten events from our list, mixing and matching to best suit their members' talents. Clubs compete in three categories, Tournament Play, Creative, and Service Events.

This year is our biggest Decathlon yet, with 34 clubs participating. With all of the new clubs forming this summer, 2001 should break all the records.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

Clubs may enter up to four tournament events, of which up to two may be team events. A Team event is one in which a club works together to achieve role-playing goals and objectives. An Individual play event is one in which a member competes against other members for first place.

A club must enter at least two tournament play events to be in the running for the big prizes. A different club member must play in each individual event. Several clubs may get points from the same tournament, but only one member from a club can enter a given Individual Play event. If the player doesn't show up and no replacement is designated, then the club can enter a different tournament event later.

So far this year, Tournament Play events have resolved at nine conventions, including *Weekend in Ravens Bluff*. The following chart shows the scoring for both Individual Play and Team Play events:

IND. PLAY	TEAM PLAY
1st Place	3 points
1st Place	6 Points
2nd Place	2 points
2nd Place	4 Points
3rd Place	1 Point
3rd Place	2 points

This year's scores, broken down by convention, follow. Qualifying scenario names are listed in italics.

Ben Con (Denver, CO)
Team Play, *Supernature*
PM Players: 6 pts

Branscon (Branson, MO)
Individual Play,
Gamble in the Alps
GAM: 3 pts
SAGA:1 pt

Dragon*Con (Atlanta, GA)
Individual Play,
The Killing Fields
ARC Fellowship: 1 pt
DAWN: 2 pts
Travelers, Inc.: 2 pts

Team Play, *In the Blinking of an Eye*
DAWN: 2 pts
Threat of Ghouls: 2 pts
Travelers, Inc.: 2 pts

GEN CON® Game Faire (Milwaukee, WI)
Individual Play, *Cat's Meow*
ARC Fellowship: 1 pt
D.O.G.S.: 3 pts
DWO: 3 pts
GAM: 3 pts

Team Play, *Do Me a Favor* (2 rounds)
Clan Yeoman: 6 pts
DWO: 2 pts
F.O.R.G.E: 2 pts

Ghengis Con (Denver, CO)
Individual Play, *Roadkill*
(Points awarded for placement in the second round)
PM Players: 2 pts

Norwescon (Seattle, WA)
Team Play, *A Hiking We Will Go*
The Seattle Mob: 6 pts

Origins (Columbus, OH)
Individual Play, *Misty Mountain*
D.O.G.S.: 2 pts
DWO: 3 pts

Team Play,
Heirs of Elemental Evil
Clan Yeoman: 2 pts
D.O.G.S: 4 pts

Weekend in Ravens Bluff (everywhere)
Individual Play, *Dragon Spirit*
D.O.G.S.: 3 pts
PM Players: 3 pts
The Seattle Mob: 2 pts

Winter Fantasy (Ft. Wayne, IN)
Individual Play, *Lost in the Translation* (Points awarded for placement in the second round)
Company of the House: 1 pt
Council of Wyrms: 1 pt
Gamers Association of Mid-America: 2 pts
OSQUIP: 1 pt
PM Players: 2 pts

In the next few months, the convention season winds up with the following Decathlon events:

Phenomenon (Sept. 30-Oct. 2, Acton, Australian Capital Territory)
Individual Play (*Cat's Meow*)
Team Play (*Do Me a Favor*)

Shorecon (Sept. 28-Oct. 1, Cherry Hill, NJ)
Individual Play (*Dragon's Deep*)

CREATIVE EVENTS

These events allow club members to show their creativity on behalf of the group. Clubs can enter each event more than once, but each individual member may submit only one entry to any single event (one person can submit in multiple events, though).

Here are the Creative Events that have resolved so far this year, and the clubs that participated in them.

Best Legendary Weapon
First Place (4 pts): The Naughty Weasels
Second Place (2 pts): PM Players
Participating (1 pt): ARC Fellowship, Clarksville Gamemaster's Guild, Company of the Rose, Council of Wyrms, DOGS, DWO, Evansville Gaming Guild, Fellowship of the Blade, FORGE, GEAR, Magma Gamers, OSQUIP, Overkill, Inc., Shadow Company Gaming Guild,

Silicon Knights, The Seattle Mob, Threat of Ghouls, YSU Gaming Guild

Best Club Newsletter for the First Quarter
First Place(4 pts): The Naughty Weasels, *Naughty Notes*
Second Place (2 pts): The PM Players, *The Evening Post*
Participating (1 pt): Black Hand Gaming Society (*The Handout*), Company of the Rose (*Calling All Heroes*), Dragons and Wizards Network (*DAWN Rising*), Dedicated Oahu Gaming Society (*The Scroll*), Evansville Gaming Guild (*The Dragon's Lair*), Fellowship of the Black Spot (*The Ink Blot*), House Rookhaven (*Quoth the Raven*), Magma Gamers (*The Vertex*), Overkill, Inc. (*O.K. Inkings*), The Phoenix Alliance (*Oracle of the Phoenix*), The Roleplayers Guild of Kansas City (*Guildletters*), Springfield Area Gamers Association (self-titled), Shadow Company Gaming Guild (self titled), The Shadow Knights (*The Squire*), Threat of Ghouls (self-titled), YSU Gaming Guild (*YSU Gaming*)

One Round Tournament
First Place (tie, 5 pts): Arc Fellowship, *Binding Arbitration*
First Place (tie, 5 pts): Naughty Weasels, *Vicious Games*
Participation (1 pt): BHGS, DAWN, D.O.G.S., DWO, GAM, Magma Gamers, PM Players, RPGKC, YSU Gaming Guild

Building the Perfect Gamemaster
First Place (5 pts): House Rookhaven
Second Place (3 pts): The PM Players
Participating (1 pt): Travelers, Inc., YSU Gaming Guild

Multi-Round Tournament
First Place (6 pts): The Naughty Weasels (*Carpe Tigris*, VIRTUAL SEATTLE)
Second Place (4 pts): PM Players (*Cloaks and Daggers*, LIVING CITY™)
Participating (2 pts): DAWN, DWO, Magma Gamers

Monster Mash
First Place (5 pts): DWO
Second Place (3 pts): Waterdeep Boys Club
Participating (1 pt): Clarksville Gamemasters Guild, Company of the Rose, Council of Wyrms, D.O.G.S, Magma Gamers, NEOGI, OSQUIP, Overkill, Inc., The Roleplayers Guild of Kansas City, Shadow Company Gaming Guild

Monster Mash, Redux
First Place (4 pts): DWO

Best New Decathlon Event
First Place (4pts): The Naughty Weasels
Second Place (2 pts): Shadow Company Gaming Guild
Participating (1 pt): House Rookhaven

SERVICE EVENTS

One of the two categories necessary to win the competition, service events represent those things that clubs can do to add value to the RPGA, and to the hobby in general. By promoting good play, and good judging, we enrich not only ourselves, but those we wish to bring into the Network, as well.

Most rounds Judged for the First Period (Jan. 1-April 30)
First Place (4 pts): Gamers Association of Mid America (11.71 rounds per member, 82 rounds total)
Second Place (2 pts): DAWN (4.53 rounds per member, 68 rounds total)
Participating (1 pt): The Seattle Mob (3.65 rounds/member, 62 rounds total), The Shadow Company Gaming Guild (.013 rounds/member, 1 round total).

TOTALS

As of this writing, here are the totals for the 2000 Clubs Decathlon

PM Players	25	9
Naughty Weasels	23	5
DWO	21	8
DOGS	13	7
DAWN	10	6
The Seattle Mob	10	4
GAM	10	4
Arc Fellowship	7	3
Magma Gamers	6	5
Shadow Company Gaming Guild	6	5
House Rookhaven	6	2
Travelers, Inc.	5	3
YSU Gaming Guild	4	4
Threat of Ghouls	4	3
Overkill, Inc.	3	3
Company of the Rose	3	3
OSQUIP	3	3
Council of Wyrms	3	3
RPGKC	3	3
FORGE	3	2
Waterdeep Boys Club	3	1
Clarksville Gamemaster's Guild	2	2
Evansville Gaming Guild	2	2
S.A.G.A.	2	2
Black Hand Gaming Society	2	2
NEOGI	1	1
Company of the House	1	1
Fellowship of the Black Spot	1	1
Fellowship of the Blade	1	1
GEAR	1	1
Phoenix Alliance	1	1
Shadow Knights	1	1
Silicon Knights	1	1

As always, a club must enter at least 2 tournament play events, and at least one Service event in order to win the competition. Any Club entering at least 10 events is eligible for a special prize after the competition is over.

The Overall winners, as well as the winners of the final Service events, will be announced at Winter Fantasy 2001, in Fort Wayne, IN, USA.

CLUB LISTING

AUSTRALIA

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Australian Capital Territory
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NEW SOUTH WALES

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Scions of Kytheria
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D.D.O.
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ENGLAND

British Armed Forces
To be put in touch with the clubs on or near your base, contact:
Coordinator: Sad
Tel: 01235 538901
sad@ukonline.co.uk

Circle of Realms
2.00–7.00 PM Sun. (All RPGs)
St. Philips Church Hall
102 Nutley Lane
REIGATE, Surrey
Contact: Adrian
Tel: 07957 724248
or 01293 784544
LRP last Sunday of the month

Croxley Roleplayers
7.00 PM–late weekdays (RIFTS, D&D, others)
Croxley, WATFORD, Herts
Contact: Nick
Tel: 0585 021030

Dungeons Realms and Galaxies Gamers Association (D.R.A.G.G.A.)
HASTINGS
Contact: Colin Nash
Tel:01424 851 807
or 07719 201 992
cnash@eurobell.co.uk

East Midlands Roleplaying Club
1.30 PM–5.30 PM (CCGs & RPGs)
Queenswalk Community Centre,
Housemans Gardens
The Meadows, NOTTINGHAM
Contact: Ian
Tel: 0115 913 2980
Jabburwok@aol.com

The Guild of Melee & Magic Central London div.
5.00 PM–11.00 PM Mon. (RPGs)
Windeyer Café, Windeyer Institute of Medical Science, University College, London
46 Cleveland Street, LONDON, WI
5.00 PM–11.00 PM Tues.(CCGs)
Medical Students Union, Carroll-Marx Hall, University College, London, 43–49 Huntley Street
LONDON WC1
Contact for both: Jason
Tel: 0181 715 8675
Magic: The Gathering tournaments first Saturday of every month

The Guild of Melee & Magic South London div.
2.00 PM–7.00 PM Sun. (CCGs & RPGs)
The Black horse & Harrow Public House, 167 Rushey Green
CATFORD SE6
Contact: Jon
Tel: 0181 650 7050

The Guild of Melee & Magic West London div.
2.00 PM–7.00 PM (CCGs & RPGs)
Northfields Community Centre
Northcroft Road
NORTHFIELDS W14
Contact: Gerald
Tel: 0181 991 1297

Hinckley Roleplaying Club
6.30 PM Fridays till late
48 Clifton Way, HINCKLEY
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Contact: Scott
Tel: 01455 440583
Email: ADandDGM@aol.com

Huntingdon and District Games Club
7.00 PM–11.00 PM Thurs. (all gaming)
HUNTINGDON, Cambs
Contact: Chris
Tel: 01480 812639

King's Lynn Games Club
7.00 PM–11.00 PM Tues. (wargaming)
2.00 PM–6.00 PM Sun. (RPGs & CCGs)
KING'S LYNN, Norfolk
Contact: Steve
Tel: 01553 811433
Real People Gaming
7.30 PM–11.00 PM Tues.
The Grasshopper (over 18's)
Bournemouth Road
Poole, DORSET
Contact: Paul
Tel: 01202 466708

South Wiltshire Adventures in Time
7.00 PM–10.30 PM Sun. (all RPGs)
Morrieson Hall, Brown Street
SALISBURY, Wilts
Contact: Keith
Tel: 01722 711484

Tuesday Knights
7.00 PM–10.00 PM Tues. (RPGs)
King of Diamonds, Chancery Lane
LONDON
Nearest Tube: Chancery Lane
Contact: Dave
tuesdayknights@snail.dircon.co.uk

Wilmslow Games Club
7.00 PM–11.00 PM Sun. (all RPGs)
The Drum and Monkey, Moss Rose
ALDERLEY EDGE, Cheshire
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Email: sbarcroft@ndirect.co.uk

SCOTLAND

Motherwell Roleplaying Club
6.00 PM–10.00 PM Tues. (all gaming)
Newarthill Community Centre
MOTHERWELL, Scotland
Contact: Steven
70 Campsie Road, Wishaw
Strathclyde ML2 7QG

Hamilton Roleplaying Club
7.00 PM–late Mondays (D&D)
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READER SURVEY

Well, there you have it. The first new-format global *Polyhedron*.™ Was it as good for you as it was for us? Please take a few minutes to review the issue on the chart below, rating each article on a scale from 1 to 5 (one being "terrible, never print such tripe again!" and five being "Ah, sweet bliss!"). Please also include whatever comments you feel are appropriate in the space allotted. Your feedback will help us improve future issues.

All that said, we know you've got a lot on your mind and a lot to do. We're not above bribery. All responses received on or before February 1st, 2001 will be entered into a drawing to win a free copy of *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerun*, a collection of new and familiar FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign setting monsters for Dungeons & Dragons.®

RPGA #_____ Name _____

	RATING				
ARTICLE	1	2	3	4	5
Network News	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Secrets of the *City of Ravens*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
FORGOTTEN REALMS 2001 Survival Kit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Elminster's Everwinking Eye	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feats Don't Fail Me Now	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Big Game Hunter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ecology of a Dungeon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arachnia Australis	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Palace of Passion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bare Bones	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Polyhedron Review	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
On the Trail	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Clubline	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: _____

Mail completed surveys to: Polyhedron Reader Response #144, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707 USA. FAX: (425)687-8287. EMAIL: Polyhedron@wizards.com.

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On the Front Cover
Back in the ancient age of the very first issue of *Polyhedron*, artist Darlene Pekul created a forlorn centaur for the inaugural cover. Nineteen years later, Jeff Easley brings us back to that same centaur, whose life has suddenly become more colorful.

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